



POLICE CHIEF'S VOW ON THUGS

Report by Sue Austin

POLICE and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys Christopher Salmon has vowed to take action on Welshpool's street drinking culture after concerns about yob-bish behaviour were "forcefully" spelt out to him during a visit to the town.

During his visit to Welshpool, town councillors called on him to impose a People and Places Order to tackle the alcohol problem.

He was handed an online petition signed by hundreds of Welshpool residents asking him to call on the region's police chief constable Simon Prince to implement the order to help stop the street drinking culture in the town. The police boss was told drinking



Russell George, Jonathan Wilkinson, Christopher Salmon, Theresa May and Glyn Davies at the Meifod talks

Cost of missed appointments totals £800,000

MISSED appointments cost Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital more than £800,000 last year.

More than 5,000 appointments did not go ahead in 2015 because the patient did not attend.

According to the trust that runs the hospital in Gobowen, every month on average 423 patients fail to attend a pre-planned appointment at the hospital. The figure represents 4.6 per cent of all appointments.

Missed appointments not only have a financial implication – as each appointment carries a cost of approximately £160 – but it also means that another patient who might have been seen instead is forced to wait longer than necessary.

Patients are being urged to let the hospital's booking team know in advance if they cannot attend an appointment.

Kim Barrow, director of operations, said: "If we can cut the number of missed appointments then that will mean more people are being seen in clinics, and they are being treated faster. Everyone benefits from that – the patients and the hospital."

"I would advise patients that it is important you attend at the date and time you are offered in your appointment letter."

had become a problem in areas such as Berriew Street Car Park, the canal and Puzzle Square. Councillors said they were frustrated that the council's calls were not being supported by Dyfed-Powys Police or Powys County Council.

The online petition had been collated by Welshpool Councillor Graham Breeze and contained 578 signatures and messages from concerned residents.

Strong

Following his visit to Welshpool on Thursday last week, Mr Salmon said: "There are strong feelings about antisocial behaviour related to drinking in the streets."

"Views have been forcefully expressed by town councillors and others in person and on the petition."

"I am grateful for the petition. I will discuss the matter with the chief constable and will ask him to let me and townsfolk know how he plans to address residents' concerns."

"Local people understand local issues better than anybody and I want to know how their thoughts are evolving. By speaking to me, the public have a direct say in criminal justice."

Mr Salmon also met Home Secretary Theresa May during her visit to Meifod near Welshpool on Friday where she raised concerns about rural crime.

The Home Secretary met farmers and local politicians when she dropped into the farm of Jonathan Wilkinson.

Mrs May praised Mr Salmon for the impact his changes were making in Mid Wales.

She said: "He has introduced rural police liaison officers into the area, there is a Farm Watch scheme that is extremely successful and he has ensured that the Dyfed-Powys area now has 100,000 more hours of officers on the beat each year."

"That is successful management."

"What we need is to increase the support we have from communities."

"The police need to work with the people and the people have to work with the police."

Montgomeryshire Assembly Member Russell George and the area's MP Glyn Davies also attended the Meifod talks.

Big crowds flock to LitFest



Comic book and TV writer Simon Furman led a workshop during Oswestry LitFest. Photo: Jamie Ricketts.

THIS year's Oswestry Literary Festival has been hailed a huge success with organisers saying the event was one of the best yet.

Hundreds of people of all ages attended a whole host of LitFest events which were held at various venues throughout the town over the weekend.

Rather than running over a number of weeks as in previous years, this year's event was held over four consecutive days with organisers dubbing the festival a Long Lit Weekend.

The festival started on Thursday and culminated in an appearance by former Blue Peter presenter Janet Ellis on Sunday where she chatted about her new book The Butcher's Hook.

Organisers of the festival said this year's festival attracted book fans of all ages.

Festival director Carrie Morris, who owns Booka Bookshop in Church Street, said: "It's been absolutely amazing."

"It feels like one of the best festivals we've ever held. There has been a buzz in the different venues we've used. We've had hundreds of people come down. We've tried to engage with every age and every area of the community."

Various workshops were staged during the festival and the world's first and only mobile poetic first aid service, The Emergency Poet Deborah Alma parked her lyrical ambulance on Festival Square.

One of the most popular was a workshop at The Centre in Oak Street led by Simon Furman, a comic book artist who has worked on the much-loved Transformers series.

The literary event, which is in its seventh year, was supported by the Shropshire Star and Oswestry and Border Chronicle, Oswestry School, Morris Cook Chartered Accountants and Moreton Hall School.

● Hit – See Page 26

TOURISM

Growth plans at attraction set to create jobs boost

UP to 40 jobs could be on the way to Oswestry as part of expansion plans at a tourist hotspot.

A sculpture park and formal gardens planted to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of Capability Brown are among the ideas being drawn up by bosses at the British Ironwork Centre.

The owners of the site say they can now proceed with their plans now that the fear of pylons being installed on the site to carry electricity from proposed Welsh wind farms has gone. The centre has also joined forces with Shropshire Wildlife Trust to create natural habitat as a backdrop for other works of art.

The expansion could also include a slip road on and off the A5 next to the centre.

Clive Knowles, chairman of the centre, said: "To celebrate the 300th anniversary of Capability Brown we have had the gardens designed in his style. Visitors will be able to wander through the trees and shrubs and enjoy the strategically placed sculptures."

"As well as works of art made here we will bring in sculptures are part of the Artists on Tour scheme which we are already involved in."

"Because of the work to create the gardens and maintain them I hope that by next year we will be employing more than 100 people at British Ironworks. We currently have more than 60 staff."

● Campaign – See Page 5

EDUCATION

Staff delighted by inspection report

STAFF at Oldford Infant School in Welshpool say they are delighted after receiving a good report from Estyn inspectors.

The school, which was visited by inspectors in January, was found to be good in nearly all areas, including the school's current performance and prospects for improvement.

Inspectors from Estyn said: "The school's current performance is good because most pupils make good progress, often from a low starting point, and achieve well by the end of the Foundation phase."

● Praised – See Page 4

INSIDE

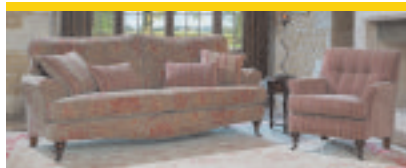
Angling Rev is hooked on footie



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School's £500,000 bus scheme breached rules

Report by Karen Evans

A HIGH school that spent £500,000 bussing in pupils from outside its catchment area has broken EU rules and council policies, it has been revealed.

Llanfyllin High School failed to tender the bus service for the 149 students from Shropshire and 38 from Powys given transport – a breach of European procurement rules.

The school also went against a Powys County Council policy by using its budget to provide a service already offered by the authority. School leaders have been told they must abide by the rules by September and come up with a plan to pay the money back. An attempt by one of the school's governors to ask for a stay of execution was refused by members of the council's cabinet at a meeting on Tuesday.

The school's governing body includes several prominent county councillors – including the leader of the Conservative group Aled Davies and cabinet member Darren Mayor.

School governor and county councillor Gwynfor Thomas said council officers were aware of the situation and chief executive Jeremy Patterson said an investigation had been launched and it would be completed as quickly as possible.

Peter Lewis, county councillor for Llanfyllin and a governor at the school, asked the cabinet to consider the impact of its actions on the pupils, the school and the community. But the cabinet confirmed its existing policy, the school must comply with it by the start of the 2016/2017 academic year, and the school must advise the council of how they intend to comply with EU procurement rules. A report on the options open to the cabinet to recover the funds, around £510,000, will also be produced.

"The school and the people running the school knew exactly what they were doing," said Councillor Phil Pritchard. "This money was money for educating the children by teachers, it has been used for a different reason, to my mind that is scandalous."

Councillor Stephen Hayes added: "I cannot support changing the policy to get Llanfyllin High School off the hook. It's a sound policy for sound reasons to my mind. What has been done is that the policy has been ignored."

Long friendship is quite a moving story



Deborah Sudlow, left, says hello to her old, new neighbour, Leanne Ward-Batha

NEIGHBOURS Deborah Sudlow and Leanne Ward-Batha have ensured their house moves haven't separated them – by both moving into a new development.

Bower Farm is a new development in St Martins near Oswestry which is now in its second phase.

Deborah and Leanne say they are very pleased to still be neighbours after living on the same street for 11 years and moving from within the village to their new homes on the same day.

The Wrekin Housing Trust development is the result of a community-led project board which was set up in St Martins in 2014 to combat the issue of a lack of good

quality, affordable housing. All new tenants must have a local connection to the area, ensuring that the local residents and families can stay within St Martins and are not priced out of the rural market.

The new residents also benefit from the trust's repairs, gas and maintenance services as well as a dedicated local housing team.

Deborah said: "It's very comforting to know that our neighbours are good, friendly people."

"It takes a bit of the pressure off moving, knowing we are already part of a great rural community but still having the newly built family sized home."

She has twin daughters who are in the same class as Leanne's daughter and her older daughter is in the same class as another neighbour's daughter.

Moving together has meant that the children feel comfortable with the move and what better way to settle into their new street than to play out on the nearby field with their friends and neighbours.

The trust also has six shared ownership properties available for those wishing to buy a share in their own home with the development which has so far generated over £9 million to the local economy and created over 80 jobs including four apprenticeship opportunities.



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Pair cleared of £300,000 cash fraud

A MAN and a woman have been cleared of playing a part in conning a farmer out of his £300,000 inheritance.

Vicky Shearer and Karl Quinlan were both found not guilty of conspiracy to defraud by a jury at Shrewsbury Crown Court on Tuesday.

The pair had been accused of conspiring with Shearer's ex-boyfriend Michael Smith, who has admitted his part, to defraud George Davies, from Oswestry, of nearly £300,000.

The Andorran bank account to which the victim transferred his inheritance had been opened by Quinlan, 36, of Bellwood Drive, York, who later flew back and forth several times after the transfer to drain the bank account over a two-month period.

But giving evidence during the trial, Quinlan told the jury his friend and boss Smith told him the cash was from the sale of a restaurant in Glasgow.

He said he had no reason not to believe him, the court heard.

Shearer, 35, of Linwood Close in Camberwell, London, also said she knew nothing about the fraud and told the jury Smith was "overpowering" and "very good at pressuring people" during their six-year relationship.

Judge Robin Onions said Smith, of Waverley Gardens, Glasgow, would be sentenced next month.

Headmaster to leave his role

THE headmaster of a Shropshire independent school will leave at Easter, it has been announced.

Gary Wright will leave his role at Adcote School for Girls in Little Ness, near Oswestry, after almost seven years at the helm to take up a new post.

Deputy head Naomi Pritchard will assume the position of acting head until a replacement for Mr Wright is appointed.

John Moody, chairman of the board of governors at Adcote, said Mr Wright had made a significant contribution to the success of the school which has undergone significant investment in recent years.

"On behalf of the governors, the staff and the pupils, we'd like to thank to Mr Wright for his work here and we wish him all the very best for the future," he said.

Former sergeant denies Cheryl sex order claim

Report by David Banner

A FORMER sergeant has denied ordering a recruit who was found shot dead at an Army barracks to meet a fellow soldier for sex.

Former troop Sergeant Andrew Gavaghan told the inquest into the death of 18-year-old recruit Cheryl James that he "never knew Cheryl at all".

He also denied being a bully to her and shouting at her so strongly that he reduced Cheryl, whose parents live at Llanymynech near Oswestry, to tears.

He told Woking Coroner's Court this week that the first he really knew of Cheryl was when she was found dead in November 1995, eventually making her one of four recruits to be found shot dead at the Surrey barracks between 1995 and 2002.

Mr Gavaghan said the recruits were told that sex was "discouraged" and against the rules but it was "difficult to police" because staff was not available round-the-clock to supervise.

Pte Mark Beards had previously told the inquest that Cheryl had been ordered by Mr Gavaghan to meet another soldier Pte Ian Atkinson in a room.

Mr Beards had told the court that while Cheryl never mentioned the word, he assumed it was for sex.

Alison Foster QC, for the James family, told Mr Gavaghan that it was claimed he told the soldier of "unoccupied part (of Deepcut) for sexual purposes".

Mr Gavaghan replied: "No I never said that." Asked about the claim that he ordered Cheryl to go into a private room with a soldier, Mr Gavaghan said: "That never happened because I never knew Cheryl until the morning that she died."

He said the only time he recalled speaking to Cheryl was on the morning of her death when she asked him for his ID as he walked into the barracks.

Meanwhile Peter Mant, for Cheryl's family, made the suggestion that a former Army sergeant picked on the young recruit.

He asked former troop sergeant Adrian Stevens: "You fancied Cheryl. You gave her all the good jobs and, when she did not respond, you started picking on her - that is the truth, isn't it?" Mr Stevens, who had described Cheryl as "very bubbly" and as a "pretty girl", replied: "No."

He also said he was shocked and surprised by her death.

The inquest continues.

New polo academy finds a home



Bob and Delina Broster want to share their love of the sport of polo

IT is known as the sport of the elite, played by rich businessmen to members of the Royal family.

But now the sport of polo has found a new home in Shropshire, thanks to a couple who say they want it to be enjoyed by everyone. Bob Broster and his wife Delina have played the sport all their lives, travelling across the world for competitions.

When they moved to the region they wanted to bring polo with them but found it difficult to seek out the land they needed in the rolling hills of the Shropshire border. Now the couple have found the ideal venue

for their Mid Wales and Shropshire Polo Academy in the Radfords Equestrian Centre at Llanymynech near Oswestry.

A special open day will be held next month.

The event, on April 23, will include demonstrations.

"We will even have a bucking bronco for aspiring riders to have a go on," Mrs Broster said.

She said the couple had been involved in horses and in polo all their lives.

Mrs Broster said: "Bob has been a professional player much of his life as well as a farrier. We have been all

over the world including New Zealand. He even had his own jousting team."

The couple moved to Castle Caerinion but were unable to find land flat enough for a polo field until they joined forces with the equestrian centre in Llanymynech.

"There is a great indoor school where we can teach the basics of polo, safely, in a controlled environment," Mrs Broster said.

"Novices will sit on our specially made wooden horses to learn how to hold a mallet and understand the rules before progressing onto one of our own polo ponies."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Two are arrested after drugs raid

TWO people have been arrested following a drugs raid.

A 24-year-old woman and a 34-year-old man were arrested on suspicion of possession of Class A and Class B drugs in Oswestry.

Officers also arrested them on suspicion of being concerned in the supply of the drugs, after a warrant was executed in the Hawthorne Grove area on Friday last week.

Police said substances believed to be controlled drugs were seized from a property in the area.

Connie Osborne, spokeswoman for West Mercia Police, said: "West Mercia Police can confirm that a warrant was executed in the Hawthorne Grove area of Oswestry on March 18."

Both people have both been bailed until April 18 while further inquiries are completed.

Man admits to driving charges

A MAN has pleaded guilty to causing death by dangerous driving and causing serious harm by dangerous driving.

Stuart Rudd, 39, appeared at Liverpool Crown Court on Tuesday, where he admitted the charges.

The court charges relate to the death of 19-year-old Isabelle Woodall from Welshpool.

The teenager died after a collision at Central Park Way, Wigan.

The tragedy happened on the evening of August 16 last year.

The case was adjourned for sentence until Thursday next week.

Rudd of Walkden Avenue East, Wigan, will be remanded in custody until then.

Deputy mayor to hold ward surgery

OSWESTRY'S Deputy Mayor Paul Milner will be holding a ward surgery this weekend.

The surgery is for the residents of Victoria Ward in Oswestry.

It will be held between 11am and noon on Saturday the 26th at Oswestry Library. He said: "I would be pleased to meet and help residents with any issues they may have at Oswestry Town Council level. All conversations are held in private surroundings and conversations can remain confidential if requested."



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School staff praised for work by inspection team

Report by Naomi Penrose

STAFF at Oldford Infant School in Welshpool have been praised for their work by Estyn inspectors.

The school was visited by inspectors in January, who found it to be good in nearly all areas. Inspectors from Estyn said: "Most pupils develop their numeracy and literacy skills successfully and use their skills effectively to support their work in many areas of learning."

"As pupils move through the school, they make sound progress in developing their confidence and independent learning skills."

Concern is voiced over sale move

AN artist says he was given just a fortnight's notice that the premises he works from will be sold at auction.

Sean Harris, from The Wild Boar Press, says his future is threatened by the decision by Powys County Council to sell the Llangynog Village workshops at auction in Cardiff today (Thursday).

The artist, animator and film maker has operated from the village for the last 14 years.

"While I was made aware by the council some time ago that this was a possibility no clear decision was presented to me until a letter less than two weeks ago," he said.

"The workshop is pivotal to my unique animation process."

Councillor Darren Mayor, cabinet member for property for Powys said: "As part of plans to consolidate the council's property tenants were contacted nearly two years ago to inform them that workshops were to be sold."

"Letters were sent in May 2014 and meetings were held in a month later."

"The tenant was informed of the council's intention to sell the workshop with him as a sitting tenant, there was no intention to seek vacant possession."

"A letter confirming the date and venue of the auction and that the sale was subject to the business's existing occupation and lease terms was sent to the tenant in February."

"A letter for information was also sent to the Llangynog Community Council."

The report also stated that nearly all pupils participate with enthusiasm during lessons, behave well and show respect, care and concern for others.

Teachers were praised for planning "interesting learning experiences that engage pupils fully, both indoors and in the outdoor learning areas".

Inspectors also said all pupils are valued and supported effectively in "an inclusive and caring community", and that there is highly effective support for pupils with additional learning needs.

Oldford Infant School caters for pupils between the ages of three and seven, and currently there are 68 pupils on roll who attend full-time.

Inspectors also commended the school's standard of leadership.

"The school's prospects for improvement are good because the headteacher provides strong and effective leadership for the school, with a clear focus on improvement," they said.

"The members of the recently restructured leadership team are already having a positive impact on their areas of responsibility."

School staff were also given recommendations for areas of improvement which included improving the performance of pupils who are more able, particularly boys and those who are eligible for free school meals; improve levels of attendance; ensure that teaching provides a good level of challenge for pupils; and refine the use of marking and target setting so that pupils fully understand how they can improve their work.

Headteacher Yvonne Naylor said: "The report recognises the support given to all learners by the strong team of staff. It praises the governing body, the strong links with the parents and the community and the achievement of the learners."

"This is a real testament to the staff, the parents and our community but it also particularly reflects how well the children do."

"I also have to pay mention to Alison Bowen, the school's chair of governors as this is the third successful inspection we have undertaken together."

Campaign gets off the ground



Sculpture Alfie Bradley working on the Knife Angel at the British Ironwork Centre

A CAMPAIGN has been launched calling for a huge sculpture created from confiscated knives to go on display in Trafalgar Square in London.

The Knife Angel is being created at the British Ironwork Centre in Oswestry from thousands of weapons donated by police forces across Britain.

Those behind the 25-feet tall knife sculpture have written to London Mayor, Boris Johnson, asking that it take its place on the fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square.

But an initial letter from the mayor's office in the capital has suggested that the knife sculpture could be too tall to sit on the platform.

The Knife Angel, which is yet to be re-

vealed in its entirety, is being created by sculptor Alfie Bradley who says he expects to use 100,000 knives of all shapes and sizes by the time it is finished.

The chairman of the British Ironwork Centre, Clive Knowles, said the initial response from the Mayor of London's office was disappointing.

The businessman said: "They have suggested that the Knife Angel may be too tall and that the plinth is fully booked until 2020."

"But I don't think they appreciate just what a powerful and national sculpture this is. I would like Boris to come up to Shropshire and see it for himself and to understand what it stands for."

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Man found guilty by jury of kidnap and blackmail

Report by David Banner

A MAN has been found guilty of kidnapping, false imprisonment and blackmail.

The 33-year-old victim of the kidnap, who is from the Oswestry/Welshpool area, was handcuffed, driven off and blindfolded in a stolen Audi car.

The car had been taken a few months earlier from outside a house at Hawarden, near Chester. Giving evidence at Caernarfon Crown Court, the victim's mother told how she'd received a panic-stricken mobile phone call from her son at midnight telling her to take cash from her safe and hand it to someone who would be calling.

She took £5,000 from her own business and £6,000 belonging to her son and handed it in a plastic bag when a man – "with a strong Scouse accent" – and woman, alleged to have been Natalie Goode, turned up outside her home.

When her husband inquired about their son the man replied: "He'll be all right – don't come near me."

Later her husband took a call from their son and when they got to him he was in a terrible state, in agony because handcuffs wouldn't come off. Police were called.

Nathan Parry, 37, of Jack's Wood, Ellesmere Port, had denied the offences.

A jury last week took more than eight hours to convict him by a ten-to-two majority.

He was remanded in custody.

Goode, 33, of Willow Road, Lache, Chester, was cleared of kidnapping and false imprisonment but convicted of blackmail.

She was bailed for a pre-sentence report. Both will be sentenced later with two other men who admitted their roles in the events last September.

The victim had denied his ordeal was "part of some kind of turf war between different drugs gangs".

Prosecutor John Philpotts told the jury they might think the events of September 2 "sound rather like the plot of a television police drama".

But the case involved "real people and real fear".

The victim had, the court heard, been warned that his kidnappers wanted cash or he would be killed with a heroin injection.

He had also been threatened with being shot in a warehouse at Birkenhead, and was told his movements had been tracked for the previous few months.

Judge Philip Harris-Jenkins warned Goode "isn't to read anything into the fact I am ordering a report".

Parry had told the jury that he'd been a cannabis dealer while working as a car valuer for a Chester motor dealership.

He told his barrister he'd had a seven-year sentence for robbery in 2002 and one of nine years in 2006.

Angling Rev hooked on footie



Footballing, angling and blogging vicar Stuart Bloor at The New Saints Football Club

LIKE many men Stuart Bloor loves his footie, his fishing and his family.

And the 53-year-old combines his passion with the other love of his life, his Christian beliefs. It has led him to be known across Britain as The Angling Rev.

Although he lives in the Black Country, Stuart spends a good deal of his time near Oswestry, in his dual role at the Welsh champions football club The New Saints.

He is not only the chaplain at the club but he also does the commentary for games on the TNS radio station.

Stuart became ordained as a minister in his early 20s and leads the Tipton Family Church, a free church in the Midlands, as well as stepping in to help other churches.

Stuart says he loves football and angling

both for the sport but also for the chance to meet some great people who have a passion for their pastime.

He said: "I have always been a keen angler and when I set up my angling blog it was natural to call it The Adventures of the Angling Rev."

His Christianity has also combined with his love of football for his latest role as chaplain to The New Saints Football Club.

He said: "I have been commenting for two years now and more recently took on the role of chaplain. I enjoy it so much. People know me and know that they can approach me at the club if they want a chat – about anything."

"It might be the players or the staff or it could be one of the spectators."

Boxing star in town to open gym

COMMONWEALTH Games gold medal winning boxer Anthony Fowler will be in Oswestry this weekend to open a new gym business.

The Active8 Gym on the Mile Oak Industrial Estate is the brainchild of Chris Johnson, Wayne Peter and Tom Brown.

As well as a gym and a training area it will also offer a sports therapy clinic on site where people can receive treatment or advice for injuries or general biomechanical issues.

Mr Peter said: "Health and fitness and the need to be active is now a major importance in people's lives."

"We wanted to offer an environment with all types of training concepts for all levels or background of customer."

Mr Brown added: "The ethos of Active8 is enjoyment and engagement."

"Fitness should be enjoyable not a chore and we aim to promote that within our facility."

"Whether a fitness enthusiast, elite athlete or new to exercise, Active8 gym aims to provide clients the ability to train within an uplifting fun atmosphere, with no intimidation or being made to feel alien."

"Exercise should be fun and that is the soul aim of the facility, all at an extremely affordable price."

Mr Fowler, who was a Commonwealth middleweight gold medallist at Glasgow 2014 will be at the gym on Saturday. It will officially open on April 4.

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BREEZE ABOUT TOWN

You might think it's good news for a town like Welshpool when national chains like Aldi, B&M and now Greggs want to open. But good news for some will mean bad news for others.

Powys County Council has already given the go-ahead for B&M to open alongside Tesco on the site of the old Smithfield Market and Aldi's plans to build alongside the Smithfield Bell go into the planners next month. Now Greggs, the biggest bakery chain in the UK wants to open up on Broad Street. Is Welshpool big enough to house two more supermarkets is the question doing the rounds and the answer is likely to be "no". That means one of the current stores, probably Morrisons or Sainsbury's is likely to hit trouble and that would be bad news for residents on two sides of the town. And Welshpool is already blessed with several excellent bakery outlets so the arrival of Greggs would certainly have a knock-on effect, with owners expressing fears for their future at a Business Forum meeting this week. It's a dilemma for both Powys and Welshpool Council planners who will be well aware of the damage these openings could do to other businesses. But councillors are unable to vote against a planning application on competition grounds so it's very likely they will get the go-ahead.

It really is "hats off" to the organisers of Oswestry's annual LitFest, which just goes from strength to strength each year. The four-day festival, celebrating the cream of Britain's literary landscape has become one of the country's top events.

It's seven years since its modest launch and who would have thought just a few years down the road it would be attracting the country's finest authors and attracting packed audiences to the many events staged during the four days? If Oswestry wasn't on the literary map before, it certainly is now, thanks to the hard work of a small group of people who work tirelessly to make Oswestry LitFest the reality it is today.

I think it's time for us all to write a letter to London Mayor Boris Johnson in support of a campaign that has been launched calling for the huge Oswestry-built sculpture created from confiscated knives to go on show in Trafalgar Square.

The 25ft tall Knife Angel is being created at the British Ironwork Centre from thousands of weapons donated by police forces across Britain but a request to Boris for it to be displayed on the "fourth plinth" in Trafalgar Square has so far been rejected.

Boris just loves the limelight and perhaps he hasn't yet appreciated the advantages of being pictured alongside this amazing sculpture.



Danielle Burgoyne was horrified to be told by her brother her name had appeared on Yik Yak



North Shropshire College's Jackie Doodson is helping to ensure students stay safe online



Bosses at North Shropshire College have taken action to prevent the use of the Yik Yak app

Misuse of social media app is causing concerns

The Yik Yak app connects people. But there are fears about the app. NAOMI PENROSE reports

TO some, it's a way of connecting people instantly with those around them, to others it's a "breeding ground for discrimination".

Yik Yak is the latest up-and-coming social media app which is increasing in popularity among teens.

It allows users within a five-mile radius to write anonymous posts, which are then voted up or down by users.

The creators of the app say their mission is to let people connect and make friends with people in their area – but many young people have reported a darker side to the app, as it has been used by some people to insult and slur their peers.

North Shropshire College in Oswestry and Shrewsbury College have taken steps to create a geofence – a virtual barrier to prevent the use of the app on its campuses.

Danielle Burgoyne, a 23-year-old paediatric staff nurse from Oswestry, was horrified to be told by her 18-year-old brother that her name had appeared on the app.

She said: "This app is terrible, it's an evil breeding ground for discrimination and thankfully I'm at an age where I can deal with it better than, say, a 16-year-old girl could."

"As someone who works with children and young people I have seen the effects of cyber bullying and body shaming, it's real and it's out there."

"Your mind is so delicate in your teenage years and shouldn't be for anyone to hurt or damage. Body image is something I have faced difficulty with over the years



Some see it as social media fun, but the Yik Yak app has a darker side

and for someone unknown to air their opinion of you online is just disgusting and can be very damaging."

An 18-year-old from Oswestry – who wishes to remain anonymous for fear she will become a target of the abuse – has also spoken of the lasting repercussions the app could have on people's lives.

She said: "People may think it's funny and a laugh, but I've seen people ripped apart for their insecurities constantly and nobody is doing anything about it."

"Some of my friends have been mentioned on it, to be honest all the posts on there are mentioning someone's name. People aren't worried or concerned with the possible outcomes of the hurtful things they say."

Yik Yak say that people can't control who views content, and that it is all

publicly available, so if you don't want to share something publicly don't post it. However, the Oswestry teenager said the app isn't being used in the way it was intended.

"In other places, people can use this app in a positive way, but here it's like animals at the zoo," she said. "I think it's a very dangerous path to walk. People being slated for their appearance, past and life choices can lead to very serious consequences."

Yik Yak offers its geofences to primary and secondary schools, in a bid to combat bullying.

Henry Nurdin, information systems controller at North Shropshire College, said: "We have made a request for a particularly inappropriate app to geofence NSC's Oswestry and Walford campuses. This is a procedure that will deny access to the app whilst they are

within either campuses' GPS coordinates." Jackie Doodson, NSC principal, added: "During tutorial periods, we are reminding students of the potential consequences of using social media responsibly and reminding them how to remain safe online as well as report any incidents."

Jill Ashford, safeguarding and welfare lead at Shrewsbury College, said the college is "strongly advising" students not to install the app and warned that anonymous threats don't always stay anonymous.

Lee Evans, spokesperson for Powys County Council, also confirmed apps such as Yik Yak were blocked on council equipment at the county's schools.

Yik Yak has made moves to nullify the potential for bullying, including by allowing schools to put up virtual fences to prevent pupils using them on school grounds.

It also has safeguards in place to prevent the app being used by under-18s.

It specifically asks that under-18s do not sign up and provide personal information, and says that when it finds out about underage users, it takes steps to remove their details from its system.

The app's makers have also produced articles on its home website urging people not to use the app for the wrong purposes.

Hilary McQuaide, a spokeswoman for Yik Yak, said: "Yik Yak is intended for users age 18 and over, and we've proactively geofenced primary and secondary school campuses so the app can't be used there."

"If a school thinks there should be a correction to one of these geofences, this can be easily requested on our support page."

"For more information, please check out: <http://blog.yikyak.com/blog/bullying-isnt-cool>"

The people behind the app also urge people not to share information if they do not want it to find its way into the public domain.

WORKING FOR YOU



I write this column in my Westminster office, immediately after voting to pass this year's budget. It has been unusually controversial, and has dominated the news agenda over the last few days. I will write about the most two significant aspects of the Chancellor's budget statement.

Firstly, and most importantly, there's the overall financial position of the UK. This is the backdrop against which every budget is set. And the news was not good. The Chancellor has an independent body known as the Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) to advise him. It has not been painting a rosy picture. Economic growth is predicted to fall back this year and next. Of course much of this is outside the Chancellor's control because UK growth depends on growth and prospects around the world, and especially in Europe. The UK may well have growth prospects stronger than other EU countries, but that's not enough to prevent a downgrade of previous OBR predictions. This puts pressure on the Chancellor's debt reduction plans.

But the budget issue which has really hit the news was the proposal to change the criteria for assessing Personal Independence Payments (PIPs). I could see immediately this was incendiary. There may have been a good case for changing the system but there were also reports that the change would take billions from the Government's financial support for the disabled. Not acceptable. Like many other Conservative MPs, I made my opposition clear. This proposal would not have been approved by MPs, and it was very soon obvious that it would be dropped.

Normally, that would have been the end of it. But then Work and Pensions Secretary Iain Duncan Smith dropped his bombshell. Despite it being obvious there was to be a policy U-turn, he resigned expressing his opposition. I was both surprised and very disappointed. Iain has led the drive to help "Welfare to Work" and has been inspirational in turning around the lives of many thousands of people destined to spend their lives languishing on benefit. He can be incredibly proud of what he has achieved over the last six years. But when one political career ends, doors open for new stars to advance – which is what three of my best friends in politics have just done. Stephen Crabb from Pembrokeshire has moved to replace Iain at the DWP – a big promotion. Alun Cairns from Vale of Glamorgan is now the Welsh Secretary, while Guto Bebb from Aberconwy joins the Government as Wales Office Minister. Could be useful to have friends in high places!

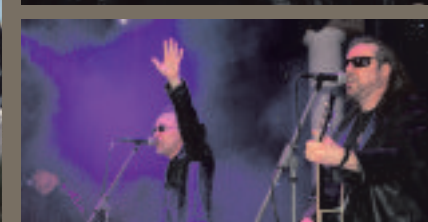
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Letters

Closure of court is big blow to justice

WITH the closure of Shrewsbury Magistrates Court there is now no court in Shropshire county.

The centuries old tradition of local crime being dealt with swiftly and fairly by people of repute who know their communities has been destroyed.

Once we had a justice system that was copied by democratic countries worldwide. It was the benchmark of any civilised country.

Now we are returning to the law of the jungle.

Once it was the thieves and robbers who lived in fear of the law.

Now it's the innocent law-abiding citizens who live in fear.

They are afraid of leaving their homes in case they are burgled.

They are afraid to walk the streets in peace and safety.

Only a small proportion of crimes ever come to court.

When they do the criminals have more human rights than the victims.

A recent case is typical.

A woman who falsely claimed £70,000 in benefits gets off with a slap on the wrist and 200 hours' community service.

She stole it off us hardworking folk.

How long does it take one of us to earn £70,000?

It is quite clear that if you are a victim of crime you will have to be willing to travel if you live a long way from Telford.

Justice was once available to everyone in the country.

Now it's just reserved for the rich. People have protest marches for the rights of cats and dogs these days.

It really is time to forcibly protest that our right to justice has been removed.

RON JONES
St Martins
Oswestry

So sad to see disintegration of our precious health service

I WORKED as a nurse from the age of 18 to 63 when I retired due to ill-health. I am now 78, and over the past years have watched the sad disintegration of our treasured National Health Service.

The removal of the hospital matron began the downward spiral. How can a health service possibly be managed by non-medical personnel? I quite adequately managed a nursing home but would not attempt to manage a factory. Neither would I expect a factory manager to manage a medical facility.

Other negative decisions caused further demise of the health service. The abolition of the SEN grade took away many caring and efficient nurses from the bedside, many of whom had excellent 'hands on' skills but could not cope with the academic side.

The introduction of Project 2000 had its negative side; making nursing a degree course meant students have less shop floor training and increased classroom instruction. Student nurses in my day learned on the job supplemented by lectures. This increased our hands on experience and thirst for knowledge.

Interesting, complex and unusual cases brought student nurses, student and junior doctors visiting the patients in their off-duty time, relishing the knowledge gained (no strikes in those days).

Closing of local small hospitals has resulted in the present bed-blocking and preventing admission of emergencies.

GPs are so bogged down with Government directives, targets and paperwork that they have reduced time with patients. If they are expected to work longer hours and weekends surely they could work on a rota basis, similar to nurses? Working weekends then being compensated by a couple of weekdays off would not be too bad. I also believe that if GPs had more patient time they could diagnose more by examination and in-house investigations thus saving hospital investigation time.

JOSE WALSON
Telford

There are two sides to information fight

DURING national service with the Royal Air Force in 1951, I came across an old 1939-45 wartime poster. The caption was: "Careless talk costs lives! You don't know who's listening".

It depicted a man in two parts, the left side was a civilian in a tribal and nice grey suit, the right side was as a German soldier sporting a monocle.

This poster bore a relevance to the 'Official Secrets Act' which many of us (sometimes) were obliged to sign a statement relating to it. Today, we British have the Freedom of Information Act which many Britishers like the USA have longed for.

To me (I may be wrong), the clash of the titans Freedom of Information versus the Official Secrets Act is just like Errol Flynn and Basil Rathbone sword fighting in the film Robin Hood.

EMYR DAVIES
Wrexham

Old image shows railway in a bygone era



Thanks to Tom Casewell of Llynclys for this photo which, although it isn't brilliant quality, is historic. He tells us it was taken at Buttington Junction in 1900, and standing on the end of the platform for trains between Oswestry and Aberystwyth is signalman Thomas Leighton.

We all need to enjoy equality in the labour market

THE leader of Poland has responded to negotiations that EU migrants should receive the same rights and benefits as indigenous workers in Britain.

I agree with that, to a point. However, this matter should be looked at, carefully, from the opposite direction.

I can tell you as a long term, occasional, "casual worker" that there has been blatant preference given to EU migrants; predominantly by employment agencies, and to a limited degree, the state, for 10 years or more. Let me spell this out. I and other Brits I have spoken with have been turned away from potential work whilst "others" have clearly not - hence whole shifts populated by one ethnic group.

A short while ago bilingual shift supervisors were being hired to liaise. I have worked where fellow EU workers and indigenous managers speak to me in pidgin English!

Sceptical? Look around you. Check for yourself. I too want equality.

G PALMER
Lawley

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

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chronicle.co.uk

Letters should be brief and **MUST** include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Question about the jet stream

WHAT is happening to the Polar Jet Stream?

The stream is a dominant player in UK weather patterns. Is it global warming responsible for such unulating behaviour patterns?

People should Google in National Geographic Extreme Weather: An Arctic Connection? to learn more while debating if to migrate for the winter or to emigrate permanently.

PHILIP GEORGE
Welshpool

Brexit supporters need to share their future vision of UK

OWEN Paterson may complain about the 'Stay in Europe' campaign being designed to 'scare' voters but at least the facts and figures produced by them are an attempt to base any argument about leaving or staying on something more than vague generalisations about the future of this country.

Should we decide to leave we will be faced with at least two years of uncertainty about our position followed by an extended period of difficult negotiations with our former partners.

But what kind of 'vision' do supporters of Brexit have? The Norway solution?

This would mean that we would still pay a considerable amount into the EU (Norway is the tenth highest contributor), have to accept their regulations about free movement of goods, services and people, with no voice at all in the decision making process, in order to be part of the single market.

No wonder the Norwegian foreign minister declared that Britain was better off in the EU!

PHIL GABRIEL
Market Drayton

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Snooker champ to show off skills

THE reigning snooker world champion will be coming to Shropshire for a planned exhibition to celebrate the sport.

Stuart Bingham will be taking part in a Celebration of Snooker exhibition next month, courtesy of members of the Oswestry and District Billiards & Snooker League.

The event, being held at Morda Village Hall Social Club, Weston Road, Morda, near Oswestry, on April 9, will be presided over by former world professional snooker referee Michaela Tabb.

The current world number two will compete in a frame by frame competition against members of the league before presenting trophies to the players for their efforts throughout the year.

Doors will open at 6.45pm and tickets are priced at £15 for the general public and £10 for registered league players.

For more information and tickets call Dennis Hughes on (01691) 662319 or 07889 969406.

Gallery's craft fair is set to be busy

CRAFTERS and artists are invited to book a space for a popular craft fair which will take place later this spring in Oswestry.

The Willow Gallery in Oswestry will be holding its spring craft fair on April 9.

Stalls are expected to book up quickly for the event.

Gallery curator Tereska Shepherd said: "The fairs were a huge success last year."

"Anyone interested will need to book your stall early, because the last two we held quickly sold out of space."

The gallery will hold further seasonal fairs on July 9 and October 22.

Contact the gallery in Willow Street for an application pack on (01691) 657575.

Men are jailed by court for trafficking cocaine

Report by David Banner

TWO men have been jailed for a total of 13 years and four months for cocaine trafficking.

Both were convicted of possessing cocaine with intent to supply.

Ben Everton, 27, of High Street, Llanfyllin, who protested his innocence when convicted by a jury at Mold Crown Court, received a total sentence of seven years.

The court heard how a statutory sentence of seven years was required because he had two previous convictions involving the supply of drugs.

Everton received a concurrent sentence for producing cannabis, which he also denied. Co-defendant Barry Parkes, 33, of Glanaber, Llanfyllin, who denied the cocaine offence but admitted producing cannabis, received a total sentence of six years and four months.

Prosecuting barrister Michael Whitty told how police followed an Audi A3 in November 2014 along the A495 in Powys. Everton was driving and Parkes was in the passenger seat.

The vehicle had been clocked on an ANPR camera on The Wirral earlier on and it was the prosecution case that the two men had been to pick up the cocaine, said to have a street value of some £10,000. An attempt was made to drive off but the car was blocked by police. Police retraced its route and found a package that had been thrown out of the window.

It contained 263 grammes of cocaine, a class A drug. Both men said that the package was nothing to do with them – and blamed each other.

Sarah Yates, for Parkes, said that her client had no previous involvement with drugs.

Michael Blakey, for Everton, said his client's previous convictions did not provide him with any assistance whatsoever.

Region's residents like a good run



The start of a recent Lake Vyrnwy half marathon in Llanwddyn

LIKE Forrest Gump, the runners of our region are setting the standard when it comes to the longest time on their feet.

Mid Wales and Shropshire have been named the best in Britain for the hilliest and longest runs done by those using the GPS system, Strava.

Both runners and cyclists can record their achievements and share them on social media.

Data shows that Powys especially provides everything any aspiring

runner could need – as well as suggesting that people across the Shropshire border in Mid Wales are just that little bit keener when it comes to putting on their trainers and embracing the great outdoors.

Powys took top spot in 2015 for hilliest average run – with an average elevation of 581 feet.

It also came top for longest average distance, 6.09 miles and the longest average time on the move at 67 minutes.

Both Mid Wales and Shropshire have hot spots for routes used by runners and/or cyclists.

One place where both runs and bike rides are recorded is the flat road around Lake Vyrnwy.

A popular 13-mile ride for cyclists, the lake road also hosts the Lake Vyrnwy half marathon each September.

The Oswestry and Ellesmere areas are shown as favourite places for cyclists, according to the latest data.

Prohibition order still in place after post accident

RUGBY training and matches will not be played at Shrewsbury Rugby Club until a prohibition order put in place by the Health and Safety Executive is lifted.

The order was made within hours of an incident on February 28 when a goal post fell on the head of a spectator who was watching his son play in a friendly match at the ground.

The man, believed to be the father of an U11 player from Oswestry Eagles, sustained serious head injuries and was rushed to the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital for emergency treatment. He is now understood to be recovering at home.

A probe into the incident was immediately launched by the Rugby Football Union, Shrewsbury Rugby Club and by Shropshire Council's public protection team.

Last week posts and cross bars were removed from the club's four pitches at the Sundorne Castle ground on the outskirts of Shrewsbury.

It is not known when new posts will be installed.

But even when they are, the club will have to wait until the Health and Safety Executive deem the ground and new uprights and crossbars to be safe.

Shrewsbury Rugby Club president and treasurer Glyn Jones said: "The prohibition order, which was put in place by the Health and Safety Executive, has not yet been lifted and until that happens we can not use the ground. Hopefully it will be lifted some time this week. At the moment we can not use or do anything at the ground. The job to remove and replace the goal posts has not yet been completed." He added: "We have been playing our games at away grounds for both adults and juniors."

"This has worked out quite well and we haven't missed too many matches."

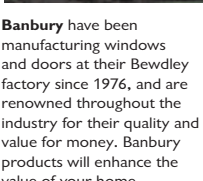
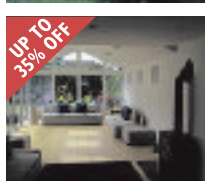
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Closure of centre means jobs gloom

THREE jobs could be made redundant after councillors agreed to close a visitor centre amid ongoing cuts.

Members of Shropshire Council's cabinet agreed to decommission the Mile End Visitor Information Centre near Oswestry at a meeting last week.

The service will instead commission Oswestry Borderland Tourism Association at the town's heritage centre on a three-year contract to deal with inquiries from visitors by email, telephone and post – saving the council as much as £18,660.

Before the meeting, Stuart West, Shropshire Council's cabinet member for leisure and culture, said: "Mile End Visitor Information Centre has been open since 1987, and is currently run by Shropshire Council's library service. There are three part-time members of staff at the centre, and all three are likely to be made redundant if these proposals are approved."

The cabinet agreed to decommission the service "as soon as possible" and that a display board would be put up at the site to signpost visitors to other sources of information. The centre provides services to less than 30,000 people a year – less than half of its peak figure at 76,000 in 2008.

Weekly community cafe takes place

A COMMUNITY cafe is held in a village near Oswestry every Tuesday morning.

Between 9am and 11.30am in Trefonen Village Hall, the cafe is open to all. The cafe is currently celebrating the Easter season.

The cafe sold hot cross buns on Tuesday this week, while on Tuesday next week there will be an Easter egg event for children.

Lowri understands the language of success

WE MEAN BUSINESS

THE Chronicle's We Mean Business campaign celebrates Oswestry's businesses. This week we focus on the businesses of Lowri Roberts.

Businesswoman Lowri Roberts runs two businesses, including the only Welsh shop based in England.

Lowri said: "I run Trosti Tanat Translation, which provides a comprehensive Welsh/English translation service for businesses worldwide. And I run Sioip Cwlwm, the only Welsh shop in England, which serves a wide range of customers in the local area and globally due to our on online presence. I run Sioip Cwlwm with my mum and we are proud to be based in Oswestry Market. We also provide advice and lessons for Welsh learners. Another aspect of the services provided by Trosti Tanat Translation is training other translators to use translation memory software, which increases productivity, consistency and quality. I'm one of only two approved Wordfast trainers in the UK. Wordfast is one of the leading translation memory software companies world-wide. As a full member of the Association of Welsh Translators, I enjoy enabling companies to both comply with their legal dual-language requirements in Wales and also achieve the benefits bilingual services can provide in an area like Oswestry, such as attracting more Welsh speaking customers."



Lowri Roberts runs two businesses in Oswestry and she is based at the town's indoor market

NEWS IN BRIEF

Fun run will help two good causes

A FUN 5km run is being organised to help raise funds for two good causes.

The Oswestry Bunny Run has been set up by James Manford and Curtis Langley, who will be running the London Marathon next month in aid of Hope House Children's Hospice and the Bone Cancer Centre Appeal at the Oswestry Orthopaedic Hospital.

Mr Manford said: "We knocked our heads together one evening and came up with the idea of a short fun run in Oswestry."

"The fun 5K run will be open for all to participate. It will be starting from Shelf Bank, behind Cambrian Station Buildings, in Oswestry and run through Henley Woods and back. It is very much a fun run so fancy dress is encouraged."

The event will take place on April 3 and registration costs a minimum donation of £7 per person and £5 for children under 12. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

For more information and sponsor forms visit www.bunnyrun.co.uk

Parents given safety warning

PARENTS picking up and dropping off pupils at a primary school have been warned not to park on yellow chevrons outside for safety reasons.

The appeal has been issued by West Mercia Police's Oswestry rural north safer neighbourhood team following several complaints and concerns about people parking on the yellow chevrons outside Selattyn Primary School, near Oswestry. A police spokesman said: "The chevrons have been put in place at public expense, and they are designed to provide a safe area free from cars to reduce the possibility of children and others going onto the carriageway and putting themselves at risk of road traffic collisions."

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Of course, Easter would not be Easter without tiny baby chicks to hold, cute cuddly lambs and goats to bottle feed and gorgeous bunnies to cuddle. But that's not all, you can groom ponies, hand milk a cow, or lead the heavy horses across the stable yard. Jump on a tractor ride to see more of the farm and spot the new lambs frolicking in the fields. The highlight of your day will surely be the Pig Racing, you

might even be lucky enough to pick the winner!

No matter what the weather there's always something to do at Park Hall, two massive indoor play barns ensure rain never stops play, with lots of the animal activities inside it really is an all-weather attraction.

If you venture outside there's a brilliant new outdoor attraction this season, a state of the art adventure play zone in the woodland that is already proving to be a great hit with the kids. You can find a 40metre Zip Wire nearby too, even adults can 'have a go!' There are loads of adventure courses and driving fun for kids too. At a slower pace, visit the museums - The Welsh Guards Collection, the Victorian School and the Iron Age Roundhouse and the 'Trenches'

A visit to Park Hall is a full, action packed day out for families, it really is a farm park like no other, there's a surprise around every corner.

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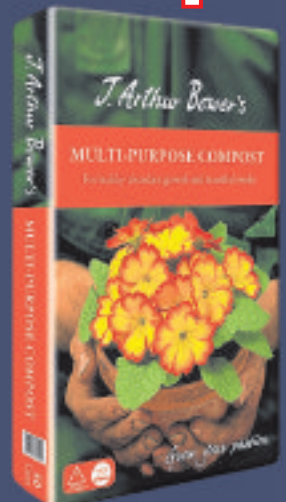
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Treat available for railway fans

STEAM train enthusiasts are being offered the chance to get behind the controls this year at one of the region's heritage railways.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway is putting on driver experience courses throughout the summer, giving visitors the chance to take charge of one of the standard train sets along a challenging route that abounds with sharp curves and steep gradients.

Half-day courses are available on April 16, May 8, September 17 and 18, and October 1 and 2, costing £395 per person. The course will start with a short health and safety briefing before taking the controls of one of the passenger steam locomotives. Once familiarised with the controls, the train will take a standard rake of carriages over the entire railway from Llanfair Caereinion to Welshpool and back.

Call (01938) 810441 to book.

Chapel to host coffee morning

PEOPLE enjoying a coffee morning event during Easter will get a chance to have a look at improvements to a chapel in a village.

Cefn Chapel at Trewern near Welshpool will be holding the coffee morning on Easter Saturday.

Treasurer Freda Davies said: "The chapel has recently had extensive improvements including a community room and kitchen.

"Please come along between 10am to noon and see the changes.

"Everyone is most welcome.

"The chapel will also be holding a fundraising quiz night at the Green Dragon, Buttington, on Thursday, March 31. The cost is £2.50 per person or £10 a team of four. The event starts at 7pm."

Council issues recycling reminder to residents

Report by Naomi Penrose

RESIDENTS are being reminded rubbish that is not contained within their wheeled bin will not be collected.

Powys County Council said wheeled bin lids must be fully closed and any additional waste that is not placed out for collection in Powys purple refuse sacks will be left with a red sticker.

Householders will be written to informing them of the reason for this being left and that repeat incidents could lead to a fixed penalty notice.

Councillor John Powell, cabinet member for environment and sustainability, said: "The council faces strict statutory recycling targets set by Welsh Government which will result in heavy fines if not met. There is still too much refuse being sent to landfill and we urge residents to ensure that they recycle as much of their waste as possible.

"The council provides a weekly kerbside recycling collection for plastic and cans, paper and card, glass and food waste.

"Residents are able to request additional recycling boxes online or by contacting the council. We also have a team of waste awareness and enforcement advisers who can visit households to provide advice and assistance to help residents minimise the amount of refuse they produce and recycle as much as possible.

The authority also reminded residents it is no longer able to collect plastic bags and plastic film - including items such as carrier bags, magazine wrappers, food bags and bubble wrap - for recycling at the kerbside, at the community recycling sites or household waste recycling centres.

Plunge into swimming challenge



Freedom Leisure is inviting youngsters to take part in a swim challenge

CHILDREN are being invited to pull on their swimming costumes and take part in a school swimming challenge.

Freedom Leisure, which operates the Flash Leisure Centre in Welshpool on behalf of Powys County Council, has invited local schools to sign up and join in with the biggest school swim.

The School Swimathon programme has been developed by the Swimathon Foundation and the ASA, and is aimed at encouraging children to improve their technique and confidence in the water, culminating in a challenge to swim further than ever before.

Schools that participate are able to use their national curriculum weekly swim lessons throughout the spring term to help improve pupils' swimming ability. This will build up to a final session during the week of Swimathon 2016, ending on April 29 when pupils will be challenged to swim their furthest ever.

"We are delighted to support the School Swimathon this year," said Freedom Leisure area manager Gwyn Owen. "We have chosen to support this event as we believe that swimming is a vital life skill."

Councillors give warning on services

TOWN and community councils across Powys have to step up to the mark to take over services or they will not survive, according to two Welshpool town councillors.

Mayor Malcolm Douglass and the chairman of its care committee Cllr Estelle Bleivas have written a strong letter saying that voluntary organisations could not be expected to do the job that local councils should do.

Recently Welshpool Town Council took over the running of the Welshpool Day Centre and councillors say that some other councils have been too slow to express an interest in running similar services.

The councillors said: "Town councils should step up to the mark to take over services and not expect voluntary organisations to do their job for them. Without the town and community councils taking the responsibility services will not be sustainable."

The letter says that Welshpool's town clerk, Robert Robinson, has pointed out to local councils for more than three years that they need to get in early to take over services otherwise the money offered will reduce or not be there.

Indoor car boot sale is planned

AN indoor car boot sale will be held in a village near Welshpool.

The event will be held at Pant Memorial Hall on April 10 from 9am to noon. Admission will be free and refreshments will be available.

Tables cost £5 for sellers. Book in advance on 07860 182560. Doors open at 8.30am for set up. Proceeds from table hire and refreshments will go to Pant Memorial Institute.

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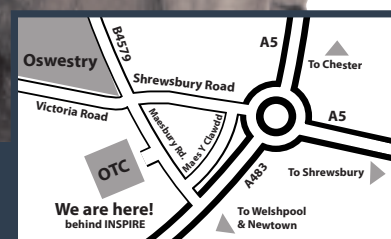
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Warm welcome awaits at Easter antiques event



Crowds flocked to Amulet Fairs' Easter Antiques Weekend at Oswestry Showground last year

FOLLOWING the massive
success of last year's first
three-day event, Amulet
Fairs is pleased to confirm
its Easter Antiques Weekend
will be returning to Oswestry
Showground again this year.

This year marks a special anniversary for the family run business as Amulet Fairs is celebrating 10 years of events at Oswestry and 30 years of hosting antique fairs throughout North Wales,

Advertisement Feature

Cheshire and the North West of England.

This event has gained a reputation second to none for quality, affordability and a warm and friendly welcome. With three massive halls packed with stalls selling a huge range of items from 17th century furniture to 1960s kitsch, there is something for all tastes and budgets.

There are acres of outside stalls selling antiques, architectural salvage and an eclectic mix of interesting collecta-

ble and decorative items. With affordable entrance costs, free admittance for children, disabled access, free parking and a dog friendly environment, Amulet Fairs makes this an event that can be enjoyed by the whole family.

Amulet Fairs' programme runs throughout the year at Oswestry with antique and vintage weekend fairs on June 11-12, September 10-11 and November 19-20.

The firm will also be returning to the historic centre of Oswestry for its third year of antique street markets. The street markets take place on May 13 and August 19.

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14 Traders give warm welcome to all

Oswestry & Border Chronicle Thursday, March 24, 2016



Traders in Llanfyllin and the surrounding area take pride in providing a first class service



The town centre of Llanfyllin has many services available to visitors and locals alike

THE popular town of Llanfyllin is well known for its warm welcome and its picturesque countryside.

Its many independent traders take pride in the personal service they provide to visitors and locals alike.

The town lies in the valley of the River Cain near the Berwyn Mountains in Montgomeryshire. Llanfyllin has a fascinating history and is known for its holy well, Fynnon Coed y Llan.

Spotlight on Llanfyllin

The well is dedicated to Saint Myllin, who is reputed to have baptised people here in the sixth century.

The parish church is also dedicated to Saint Myllin. The medieval motte and bailey castle of Tomen yr Allt was probably destroyed by Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1257.

The castle earthworks are still present.

Llanfyllin was granted a charter as a mar-

ket town in 1293 by Llywelyn ap Dafydd under Edward I, one of only two Welsh towns to have received its charter from a native ruler.

The charter was confirmed by Edward de Charlton, Lord of Powys under Henry V.

Today Llanfyllin remains a busy town and is popular with tourists from a wide area who are keen to stay in the area to enjoy its beautiful landscapes.

Many tourists stop in Llanfyllin for a few days on their way to the Welsh coast while oth-

ers spend longer in the area to enjoy all that it offers.

Another major draw for visitors is the Llanfyllin Workhouse, known as Y Dolydd.

Built in 1837, this imposing stone building served as a workhouse for up to 250 inmates until 1930, when it became a local authority institution and later a care home. It finally closed in 1983.

The Workhouse enjoyed a brief period of rejuvenation as an outdoor pursuits centre,

before being left empty from the mid 80s. The historic yet rather austere buildings remained empty and derelict until local residents formed a charitable body to save the buildings, eventually taking full ownership in 2008. Work began soon after, clearing the site and preparing to renovate led by local volunteers as well as visitors from afar.

The buildings and surrounding land is now owned and run by the community, for the community.

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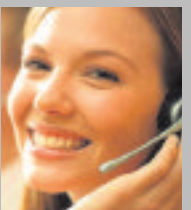
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Fantastic community spirit is alive and well

VISITORS and shoppers to the town of Llanfyllin are sure of a warm welcome thanks to the town's great community spirit.

That fantastic spirit was demonstrated when the town's landmark tree, known as the Lonely Tree, was damaged in storms.

The tree had stood on a hill overlooking the town for generations and when news of the tree's damage, local campaigners launched a battle to save it. Volunteers covered its remaining roots in soil, hoping that the tree would survive.

Experts later conceded defeat in the battle to save the tree after finding that it had died.

However, it is hoped the tree's legacy will continue to live on through saplings grown from its seeds.

The remains of the tree will stay on the site above the town.

The majestic Scots pine had been a prominent landmark on the top of the hill for centuries.

It was where marriages had been proposed and ashes scattered, and it had become the much-loved emblem of the town.

It came 10th in the European Tree of the Year competition recently with 1,548 votes and was shortlisted in the National Trust's Top 10 Special Places.

The battle to save the Lonely Tree was a fine example of the community spirit in Llanfyllin which prides itself on its many groups and voluntary organisations which do their best to improve the life of people in the area.



The Lonely Tree overlooking Llanfyllin which was blown over in storms

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Opening of Llanfyllin Workhouse History Centre



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Photographs of Old Llanfyllin

2.00 Opening of the History Centre by
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3.00 Trevor Fishlock: 'A Gift of Sunlight':
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4.15 Public showing
of the new film
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Sunday 15 May

11 - 5 Craft Fair
The Weekend Museum
Photographs of Old Llanfyllin
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Richard Hewitt and Jack Roberts with the two business awards



Some of the aquarium's designers Shannon Hunter, Tia Eggerton, Beth Ryan and Amy Doveston



Agricultural Star Apprentice Owain Ingram

Success at college



NSC's hairdressing Star Apprentice Abigail Hinton



Business students with their awards, with business lecturer Sarah Probert, fourth from right



Hospitality and catering student Lucy Jones



The redesigned fish tank at the Harris Centre



Bekki Fardoe, business administration Star Apprentice

THE hard work of students and staff at North Shropshire College in Oswestry has been recognised through a series of activities.

During the recent National Apprenticeship Week, the college chose a Star Apprentice for each curriculum area the college has apprentices working in.

The business administration Star Apprentice was Bekki Fardoe.

Bekki works on the reception of NSC's Oswestry and Walford Campuses and assists other departments with administration work.

Bekki said: "The main benefits of doing an apprenticeship are learning new skills and gaining a qualification alongside, it can lead to a permanent job and gives you the hands on experience that is essential these days when applying for other jobs."

"Since I started my apprenticeship, I have had experience in various roles.

Report by Naomi Penrose

"I have worked on reception at the Oswestry and Walford campuses of NSC and helped other departments such as student finance, work-based learning and schools liaison.

"I have enjoyed the variation of my job role and being able to develop lots of new skills and build my confidence."

Doing an apprenticeship may lead to taking on more responsibility and learning new skills.

Bekki said: "I have been given more responsibility in my job role as my apprenticeship has gone on, I have had to cover reception by myself due to staff absences."

"I decided to do an apprenticeship after deciding not to go to university."

"I felt it was the best way to get into a job as well as getting more qualifications."

Abigail Hinton was selected as the NSC's Star Apprentice in hairdressing.

She has been working at Checkers Hair Salon in Oswestry.

Abigail said: "I have been doing my training in the salon and in the college, learning new skills that I can use in the salon which has helped me run my own column of clients successfully and work efficiently."

"I have enjoyed doing my apprenticeship, working as part of a team, I really enjoy my job."

"You get the chance to improve your skills and get stuck into a job you will be doing every day, you get the chance to understand the profession and gain experience."

"I have also gone on to do other training courses through my employer and the college, since starting my apprenticeship I have learnt a lot of new skills such as colour and cutting techniques."

"The college has helped me achieve my targets to complete my qualification quickly."

Owain Ingram was selected as NSC's agriculture Star Apprentice.

Owain works on a dairy farm in Llanymynech near Oswestry and is completing a Level

3 Advanced Apprenticeship with the college. Owain said: "I tried to do a full-time agricultural qualification, but I prefer to be hands on so I switched to an apprenticeship. "I had been working for my employer part-time since school; he was keen to pass on his learning to the next generation of farmer."

"I like the variety; you get lots, working with stock and tractors. I'm an outdoors type; I'm always on the go. The main benefit of doing an apprenticeship is you earn whilst you learn, it is the best incentive."

Business students at North Shropshire College were honoured at the 2016 Businesses for Children Awards (BCA).

The students and the college's business curriculum lead, Sarah Probert, were awarded for their work with NEST (Nurturing Enterprise Spirit and Talent), set up by business students to foster and nurture young entrepreneurs and to expand on the spirit of enterprise societies throughout the community and the college. The college won two awards on the

night, winning the Best Educational Business for Young People award and the Supportive Business for Children and Young People award.

Sarah Probert said: "I am extremely honoured and grateful that the hard work of our NEST students at NSC has been recognised by the judges of The Businesses for Children Awards."

Meanwhile, animal management students at the college's Walford Campus have redesigned one of the fish tanks in the reception area of the Harris Centre.

The aquarium contains various tropical fish from across the world.

Five hospitality and catering students from North Shropshire College's training restaurant, Scholars, recently took part in the Welsh International Culinary Championships at Coleg Lladrillo in Rhos-on-Sea. The students were entered into the salon skills competitions of potato piping and classical vegetable cuts.

Lucy Jones won the bronze award for her potato piping.



Moreton First sports captains Theo Bould and Iris Girvan



Moreton First's sports squad with coaches Alison McDonald and Simon Taylor which will be going to Jersey for a five-day tour



Moreton Hall School's lacrosse first team celebrates more sporting success

Busy time for school students

SPORTY students at Moreton Hall School near Oswestry have had a busy time recently showing off their skills.

The school has been enjoying great success in the lacrosse pitch.

The National Schools' Tournament is the highlight of the season for all lacrosse playing schools and brings together the finest players and teams in the country.

In the school's best ever performance, all Moreton Hall teams finished in the top 16 in the country and in addition, the under 19B and under 13 teams secured a top eight position.

Of particular note was the performance of the under 13s who got through to the quarter finals and are now one of the top eight teams in the country in their age group, only losing out on the top four by a golden goal.

Head of sport, Kate Groves said: "We have had a fantastic set of results at the National Schools' Tournament.

"Our lacrosse continues to grow from strength to strength and next year we are hoping to play a third team in the under 19 tournament which

Report by Naomi Penrose

only a handful of schools are able to do – a testament to the depth and strength of the lacrosse at Moreton."

Meanwhile a group of students from Moreton Hall will be heading to Jersey for a five day sports tour. A squad of 15 players will be put through their paces during a variety of coaching clinics to improve skills in hockey and football. The finale of their enthusiasm and training will be when the students will compete at the Jersey Games Tournament against many other teams. The group will also receive educational sessions at Durrell Wildlife Park and some down time to enjoy the local sightseeing. The group will be accompanied on the trip by Alison McDonald, head of Moreton First Sport.

She said: "This will be a wonderful experience for the students, training alongside and playing against top quality opponents. It's a great opportunity for many to improve their tactical skills and fitness. We're all very excited."

It's the first sports tour for Moreton First. Students have raised money for the trip including holding a bake sale.



Performances by Moreton Hall's lacrosse second team have helped the school become one of the best in the country



Moreton Hall's under 13 lacrosse team has performed exceptionally well



Puzzling over pension jargon?

"FLEXI-ACCESS drawdown", "open market option" and "safeguarded benefits" are some of the pension terms most confusing for consumers, reveals Citizens Advice Shropshire.

The local charity, which delivers face to face Pension Wise appointments in Shropshire, says people would find it easier to understand their pensions if the industry used simple, standard language to describe their products.

Some people are also unclear about terms which appear to be more straightforward, putting them at risk of missing out on the best pension options for them.

For instance staff in Shropshire have reported cases where consumers wrongly believed that their 'selected retirement date' was set in stone as the date they could access their pension, when in fact they could have accessed their savings ahead of this date.

To help people get to grips with their pension, staff at Shrewsbury have identified the pensions jargon which people find most perplexing and have explained them in simple terms including:

OPEN MARKET OPTION: This is the right you have to shop around to find an annuity that suits your needs. You don't have to stay with your current pension provider. The rates you are offered by different annuity providers can vary dramatically, and once you have made your choice it can be extremely difficult and often impossible to go back on your decision.

SAFEGUARDED BENEFITS: These are special features attached to your pension pot that guarantee certain payments. Safeguarded benefits are usually defined benefit pensions (for example, a final salary pension, guaranteed minimum pension, or guaranteed deferred annuity). Some defined contribution pensions have features attached which make



It could be time to sort out your pension

them safeguarded, which includes a guarantee from your pension provider about the rate of pension to be provided when you retire (for example, a guaranteed annuity rate).

UNCRYSTALLISED FUNDS PENSION LUMP SUM (UFPLS) OR 'TAKING CASH IN CHUNKS': This option became available through the new pension freedoms. It allows you to take multiple withdrawals (cash lump sums) from your pension. For each withdrawal, 25 per cent is tax-free and the other 75 per cent is taxed at your marginal tax rate for that tax year. The remainder of your pension pot remains invested.

SELECTED RETIREMENT DATE (SRD): When you take out a personal pension, you

select the date when you think you would like to access your pension pot. You do not have to take your pension at the SRD, you may be able to take it earlier or later, but you should check the terms and conditions of your policy with your provider as some policies may have restrictions. If your pot is invested in with profits funds, the provider will often have the ability to apply a reduction to your fund if you take it at a date other than your SRD.

TRANSFER VALUE: If you want to move your pension from one provider to another, this is the amount you'd get if you moved your pension elsewhere. It may be less than the 'fund value' of your pension because it will include any charges for transferring.



Pensions advice is not just about confusing financial terminology



Citizens Advice can help you with pensions

FLEXI-ACCESS DRAWDOWN (also referred to as getting an adjustable income): This option means that your money remains invested in a pension fund. You can draw money out directly from the pension pot flexibly, to either provide an income or to take lump sums.

You can only take one tax-free lump sum of 25 per cent of the total pot when you put the whole pot into drawdown. All other money drawn will be taxed as income. The money left in your pension can be invested, so the level of funds could go up or down.

LIFETIME ALLOWANCE: This is a limit on the amount of pension benefit that can be drawn from all of your pension schemes without triggering an extra tax charge. It applies to

the total of all the pensions you have, including both your defined contribution and defined benefit schemes, but excluding your State Pension. This is currently set at £1.25million and from April 2016 this will change to £1million. In some circumstances you can apply to protect your pension savings. If you are above this threshold, a tax charge will be applied to any excess payments.

Recent research from Citizens Advice shows 27 per cent of people with defined contribution pensions feel that they don't understand their pension plan, while fewer than one in five (19 per cent) feel very confident. To book a free face-to-face or phone appointment, call 0300 330 1001 or visit www.pensionwise.gov.uk

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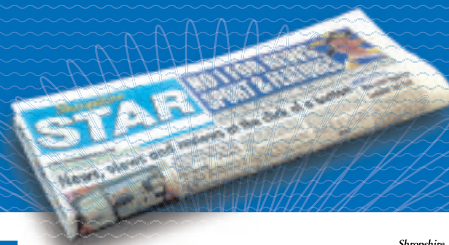
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STAR



Richard Major was at the helm of Shrewsbury's oldest retail business



Mr Major regarded his staff as being like a family



Mr Major was an ebullient man who lived a full and varied life

Retailer will be missed by many

THE owner of the oldest retail business in Shrewsbury, Richard Major, has recently passed away and the business is set to continue in the family with his brother John at the helm.

Established in 1874, Majors retails quality brands of ready-to-wear clothing for men and women. The business was taken over by Richard Major 43 years ago when he was just 20. The business orig-

inated as a purveyor of quality top hats, and the five family generations have seen the changing face of 140 years of retail history.

Richard 'Dick' Major, a well-known Shropshire businessman, sadly passed away at his home in Shrewsbury on January 3 this year, so now his brother John Major will be taking over the family business.

Richard was described as: "A character flamboyant, ebullient, mildly eccentric, sporting, enthusiastic about life but always a gentleman, a friend and a devoted father, albeit

with opinions and theories about everything and anything"

Staff commented: "The huge number of people who attended the celebration of his life at Shrewsbury's United Reform Church, and the glowing and amusing tributes paid by his brother John and by two friends Johnny Ireland and Roger France-Hayhurst, were testament to the full and varied life he led.

"Indeed, few people knew that he was a regular worshipper and choir member at the church where we gathered to remember him.

"Anyone who talks of Mr M always does so with a smile and a story to tell.

"He was a family man with a family business - his gratitude and loyalty being proved by the longevity of staff some members being employed for more than 30 years and working late into their 70s or even 80s.

Support

"He was a very kind man, not just to his staff but also our children, often buying them ice creams, as he was a big kid himself!

"He saw and spoke of all his staff being a family, whom he would support if ever needed." He supported local businesses and fre-

quented the local market whether for local fish, or the butcher's bones for the beagles.

He also supported Shrewsbury street pastors, being out with them all night over the Christmas period.

Staff continued: "Majors' continuing success can be put down to its exceptional quality of clothing combined with excellent customer service and friendly members of staff."

Although sadly missed, Majors of Shrewsbury, Oswestry and Welshpool, also Parker Taylor of Bridgnorth, will continue to develop and strive with a lasting presence of Mr Richard Major.

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Cafe burglars caught after car breakdown

MEN who broke into a cafe in the early hours of the morning claimed they were so drunk they could not remember doing it.

But the claim was dismissed as rubbish by a crown court judge.

Judge David Hale, sitting at Mold Crown Court, said that they had been able to break into the cafe in Llangollen and steal property and leave in a car.

The court heard how they were arrested when their car broke down.

Defendants Jamie Jones, 27, of Dee Bank, Llangollen, his brother Joshua Jones, 21, of Montgomery Road, Wrexham and Richard Lee Watson, 26, of Bridge Street in Wrexham, admitted burglary at Maxine's Cafe in Llangollen on November 4 last year.

Jamie Jones received nine months, Watson eight months and Joshua Jones received nine months suspended for two years with 35 days rehabilitation because of his mental health problems.

Prosecuting barrister Elen Owen said that at 4am on November 4 last year, a person living above the cafe heard a sound as if there was someone breaking in.

It transpired that those responsible had smashed the front door and also damaged several panes of glass at the front of the building.

Philip Clemo, for Joshua Jones, said that his client had some very serious mental health issues which needed to be dealt with. Ceri Evans, for Jamie Jones, said that he had a girlfriend and two children and was looking forward to getting back to family life. Henry Hills, for Watson, said that his client had not engaged with the probation service, was realistic and knew it would be custody.

No ambulance cover in area

NO ambulances were available in the entire of Shropshire for part of Saturday, sparking a call for help from health chiefs.

The stark situation was revealed by Mark Docherty, director of clinical commissioning and service development at West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Mr Docherty was appearing before Shropshire Council's health scrutiny committee to answer concerns over the deterioration in the ambulances response times in the county.

It comes a day it was revealed that half of all ambulances sent to Shropshire's two main hospitals are being forced to wait for 30 minutes or more before patients are admitted.

Mr Docherty said: "This weekend we quite frankly ran out of ambulances. There was a period on Saturday where if a cardiac arrest had come in we had nothing to send and that is a really bad thing and we do not want to be there.

"We need help, we need help off the health economy to help us deliver a more effective ambulance service, that is safe."

Mr Docherty said the ambulance service is facing significant problems with delays in transferring patients at hospital. Mr Docherty said: "The delays are a problem to us because it consumes resources and it ties up ambulances."

Police finance boss suspended

THE head of legal services at a police force has been suspended over payments made to a firm of barristers where her then husband worked

The Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) is investigating what role Samantha Gainard, head of legal services at Dyfed-Powys Police, had in instructing the barristers' chambers where her then husband worked.

The police watchdog is also investigating whether she declared a potential conflict of interest.

An IPCC spokesman said: "The allegations relate to payments made by Dyfed-Powys Police for legal services over a number of years to a barristers' chambers where her then husband worked.

"The IPCC is investigating what role Ms Gainard had in instructing the chambers, in signing off any invoices, and whether she declared any potential conflict of interest related to transactions when required, in line with force policies and procedures."

Students dig in to help David replace tree at school



The tree is planted outside the Marches School Sixth Form building

AFTER heavy storms damaged one of the oldest trees standing outside The Marches School Sixth Form building in Oswestry at the end of last year, the entrance to the school was left with both a literal and metaphorical hole to fill.

That was until Shropshire Council worker David Woodhouse offered to donate a tree of his own to the site.

As arboricultural officer for the council, Mr Woodhouse is used to condemning trees across the county and over the past few years has

found that very few of the trees that are cut down throughout the area are ever replaced. Wishing to tackle this issue, he has spent a significant amount of his own time giving back to nature, growing trees in his allotment at his own cost and taking them out to plant them where they are needed the most.

Mr Woodhouse hopes to make a long-term difference with his contributions and, having been involved in many tree inspections at the school and having seen a small number of trees

disappear from the road frontage at the school over the years, he decided to replace the valuable beech tree with the gift of a sweet chestnut tree from his allotment.

Staff and students were delighted with the gift and Phoebe Jones and Thomas-Henry Jones, two Sixth Form students at the school, even got involved to help Mr Woodhouse plant the tree, keen to be a part of leaving such a long and lasting contribution to the school. While they got their green fingers dirty, the two stu-

dents spoke of how they could imagine passing the school in 50 years' time and looking back at the contribution they had made.

Mr Woodhouse spoke of his passion for nature and how he "liked to invest in the future". He said: "When something significant from nature is taken away, it is important to put something back so we can see a continual renewal of tree stock. The sweet chestnut is a wonderful tree that will be a great addition to the grounds at The Marches School."



Phoebe Jones, Thomas-Henry Jones and David Woodhouse admire their work

Funding presentations provide boost to groups



Hope House Children's Hospice was one of the beneficiaries from the Tree of Light

Report by Naomi Penrose

A NUMBER of good causes have received funding boosts after receiving cheques from the annual Tree of Light fundraising initiative organised by the Rotary Club of Oswestry.

Among the groups benefiting from the funding was the Marches Riding for the Disabled Association group which meets at Penycod Stables, Pant.

The group currently provides riding lessons for five riders with disabilities.

In a further presentation Hope House Children's Hospice patient Via Turner received a cheque from the rotary club from Tree of Light organiser Mike Jones.

After the success of his 'Bring Back Waving Santa' Facebook appeal at Christmas, Oswestry's Lee Barnfield asked the 1,400 members of his Facebook group to give something back to the local community by donating in support of the Tree of Light Appeal. Setting up an online giving site, Lee was delighted to see £200 raised for the Christmas appeal.

One of the beneficiaries was Transhouse Trust, an Oswestry organisation that helps patients who have suffered life-changing spinal injuries. Lee joined members of the club on their visit to one of the Transhouse homes to meet Professor Wagih El Masri, founder and chairman of the trust, and Margaret Kynaston, a director of the trust.

Funds from the Tree of Light initiative also went to the North Shropshire Special Olympics group. And in a further presentation Dick Wildgoose, president and joint founder of the Cricket Federation for People with Disabilities, received a cheque from the Tree of Light Appeal.



The cheque is handed over to the Marches Riding for the Disabled Association



Transhouse Trust was given financial backing



The Cricket Federation for People with Disabilities received a cheque

↑Property

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

21
Oswestry & Border Chronicle
Thursday, March 24, 2016



Farmhouse has superb range of outbuildings

A handsome Victorian farmhouse set in unspoilt rolling countryside with Gryn Hill and Offa's Dyke nearby, Berthlwyd at Moelfre, Oswestry has 11 acres of land with a superb range of outbuildings. The property is on the market through Halls for £595,000. The farmhouse, which is spacious, having five bedrooms, is a truly wonderful buy for those looking for a house with land within 10 miles of Oswestry and Llanfyllin. Packed with character and charm and just a short driveway from the village, the farmhouse has a reception hall with

stairs off, a drawing room with beautiful views of the landscaped gardens and hills in the distance, an open fireplace and a wealth of ceiling timbers, a side entrance hall, a WC, a pantry area with a second staircase leading to bedroom five's landing, a former dairy/back kitchen with original slate cold plates and a slate floor, a boot room/pantry, cellar and a dining room with beautiful garden views and an electric fire. Bedroom one has views and a recessed wardrobe, bedroom two again has great views and the bathroom includes a bath and shower unit. Bedroom three has a side

window overlooking the farmyard and there are two further bedrooms. The outbuildings include two barns (one being the former farmhouse), a stable block, cart house, former stable and a store, a Dutch barn and lean-to, a further barn and three stores. The formal gardens are laid mainly to the front of the property. They are landscaped with planted trees and there are additional side gardens and orchard. The orchard is located to the side of the property with a pond and three timber sheds. For further information contact Halls on 01691 670320 or visit www.hallsgb.com



Substantial family home by waterside has fishing rights

Highclere, Milford Road, Newtown, is a substantial waterside family home with the rarity of 0.75 of an acre of gardens within the town centre. The property is for sale through McCartneys for £400,000. Highclere offers superb five bedroom accommodation and is complemented by ample parking, outbuildings and grounds with river frontage on a picturesque stretch of the Severn. Gently sloping paths and steps lead to the lower lawns, the river, an original air-raid shelter and a sizeable log cabin set among the woodland. There is also a personal river-side jetty giving access to the water ideal for launching canoes and taking up the fishing rights that go with the property. Contact McCartneys on 01686 623123.



Stunning conversion enjoys fantastic countryside views

A stunning detached barn conversion with flexible accommodation, View Barn, Marton near Welshpool, has delightful grounds and some of the most spectacular views in the area. The property is on the market through Strutt & Parker with a guide price of £525,000. Accommodation includes reception hall, kitchen/dining/sitting room, utility room, sitting room and four/five bedrooms. There is also a games room/bedroom five, three bath/shower rooms, one which is ensuite, and a study/slug. Outside there is a double garage, log stores and garden. View Barn is a beautifully converted part-stone, part-timber property occupying the most fantastic elevated position above the village of Marton, with phenomenal south facing views towards the Stiperstones. For more information contact Strutt & Parker on 01743 284200.



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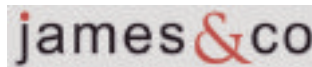
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Church Lane
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- With outstanding views over the village and surrounding countryside
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- Adjoining amenity woodland and a partly demolished former stable block
- A small parcel of adjoining land is also available via separate negotiation
- Gated driveway with oil central heating and part secondary glazing. EPC Rating F

NEW



Jasmine Gardens
Oswestry £167,500

- NO CHAIN -
- A most comfortably appointed and spacious Detached Modern 2 Bedroom Bungalow situated in a popular location
- Entrance Hall, L shaped Sitting/Dining Room, Kitchen
- 2 excellent Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- Double glazing, gas central heating. EPC Rating D
- Ornamental front garden with a delightful enclosed rear garden with patio

NEW



Fitzalan Road
Oswestry £139,995

- Spacious 3 Bedroom End of Terrace Property set on a corner plot
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Lounge
- Dining Room, Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms (2 of which are double) and Family Bathroom
- Private gardens extending to the front, side and rear.
- Gas central heating and double glazing. EPC Rating E

NEW



Telford Avenue
Chirk Bank £204,995

- A deceptively spacious 4 Bedroom Detached Dormer Bungalow
- In an excellent position on the edge of the popular village of Chirk Bank.
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Dining Room,
- 2 Ground Floor Bedrooms and Bathroom
- 2 First Floor Bedrooms and Shower Room.
- Well maintained gardens, large driveway and garage
- Gas central heating and uPVC double glazing. EPC Rating D

NEW



Station Road
Llanymynech £99,995

- A spacious FREEHOLD 3 Bedroom Ground Floor Apartment
- Situated in the heart of the popular village of Llanymynech
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen
- 3 Bedrooms and Family Bathroom
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NEW



Ardmillan Close
Oswestry £215,000

- A rare opportunity to purchase a Detached 4 Bedroom Bungalow
- Maintained to a high standard throughout
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Bedroom 4/Dining Room,
- 3 further Bedrooms and Bathroom.
- Good size rear garden including patio area.
- Enclosed lawn and a long driveway leading to a single garage.
- Gas central heating, double glazing and CCTV are installed

NEW



Laburnum Drive
Oswestry £136,995

- A deceptively spacious 3 Bedroom Semi-Detached House
- Maintained to a high standard throughout
- Ent Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Dining Room, Utility & Cloaks
- 3 good size Bedrooms and a Family Bathroom.
- A large enclosed rear garden, further lawned garden and driveway
- Gas central heating and double glazing are installed throughout

NEW PRICE



Lloyd Street
Oswestry £121,995

- A delightful 2 Bedroom Property situated on the fringe of the town centre
- Entrance Hall, Living Room, Kitchen
- Lobby leading to useful Storage Room and Cloakroom
- Two good size bedrooms and the Bathroom
- Externally the property has a good size enclosed rear garden
- Gas central heating and double glazing are installed throughout
- An ideal first time buy or investment. EPC Rating D

NEW



Maes Yr Ysgol
Llanfachain £174,995

- A delightful 2 Bedroom Detached Bungalow
- Situated on a small residential cul-de-sac
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Kitchen, Rear Porch
- 2 Bedrooms and Bathroom.
- Lawned gardens to front and rear.
- A tarmac driveway and garage provide ample off-road parking
- Oil central heating and uPVC double glazed windows and doors

NEW



Hayes View
Oswestry £315,000

- Executive Detached Family Home situated in large plot in a private cul-de-sac
- Ent Hall, Cloaks, Lounge With double doors leading into Dining Rm, Conservatory
- Kitchen/Breakfast Room overlooks the garden to the rear
- Utility Area leading directly into the integrated Double Garage
- Master Bedroom with En-Suite & 3 other Bedrooms & Family Bathroom
- Well maintained and secure South facing rear garden
- Large tarmac driveway with views towards open countryside.



Weston Road
Morda £219,000

- Spacious 4 Bedroom Detached Family Property in a popular residential area
- Entrance Hall, Cloakroom, Lounge, Dining Room
- Kitchen/Breakfast Room, Conservatory, Master Bedroom (en-suite)
- 3 further Bedrooms and Family Bathroom.
- Generous outside space with large patio area extending to rear and side
- Large lawned garden, single garage and parking
- Gas fired central heating and double glazing. EPC Rating



Fitzgwarne Drive
Whittington £224,995

- An immaculately presented 4 bedroom Detached Family Home
- Situated in a sought after location in the popular village of Whittington
- Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Room, Family Room
- Kitchen/Breakfast Room, Utility, Cloakroom,
- Master Bedroom (en-suite), 3 further bedrooms and Family Bathroom
- Good size rear garden, driveway and single garage
- Double glazing and gas central heating together with a burglar alarm

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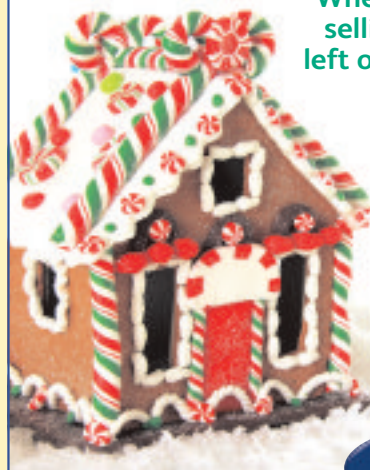


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Smallholding is in an idyllic location

A smallholding in an idyllic rural location, Ty Cerrig at Croesaubach has outstanding views of the Shropshire plain, yet is just three miles from Oswestry. It is for sale through Bowen Son & Watson with a guide price of £350,000. The property is a spacious three-bedroomed detached cottage standing in mature gardens, a range of useful outbuildings, stables and field shelters together with about 10.75 acres of excellent pasture land located in a ring fence immediately to the rear of the house. With some original features, the cottage has double glazing and oil central heating. Call Bowen Son & Watson on 01691 652367 or visit www.bowensonandwatson.co.uk



Family home constructed to a high standard has spacious accommodation

Plas-Y-Don at Cefn, Trewern, comprises a superb detached 3-4 bedroom family home constructed to a very high standard in 2005/06, and offering spacious and adaptable accommodation on two floors. It is on the market through Halls for £280,000. The property is beautifully presented and in excellent decorative order throughout. In brief the accommodation provides for a storm porch to front elevation with entrance door leading into a large reception hall with doors off to a light and attractive sitting room with feature fireplace housing a modern inset electric fire, study/fourth bedroom with adjacent shower room, superb spacious kitchen/dining/living room with quality fully fitted kitchen, French doors leading out to side elevation gardens with magnificent countryside views, snug, utility and boiler room. On the first floor, there is a master bedroom with windows to two elevations with expansive countryside views to the rear, and having the benefit of an en-suite shower room, two further double bedrooms each with 'his and her' fitted wardrobes and a generous sized family bathroom. Outside the property is approached off the council maintained roadway via a timber gate. For more information contact Halls on 01938 555552.



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Casualty
9.35pm
Connie becomes embroiled in a convicted murderer's plan to escape from prison by being admitted to Holby, in the company of his prison guard lover. As the situation escalates, Connie's fate is placed squarely in Jacob's hands, and he willingly places himself in danger to keep her safe.



Flog It!
3.50pm
Members of the public gather at the Imperial War Museum Duxford in Cambridgeshire to present their antiques to James Lewis and Christina Trevanion. Paul Martin also investigates the story of the Battle of Britain and the role played the Hawker Hurricane alongside the more famous Spitfire.



Live International Football
7.30pm
Germany v England (Kick-off 7.45pm). Mark Pougatch presents coverage of the friendly encounter between the old rivals, which takes place at the Olympiastadion in Berlin. This game serves as a Euro 2016 warm-up, and is the first meeting between the sides since November 2013.



The Change-Up
11.25pm
Laidback ladies man Mitch secretly envies best friend Dave's life as a husband and father, while Dave in turn longs for Mitch's lack of responsibility. But when they magically switch bodies, they both learn that the other does not have it so easy. Comedy, starring Jason Bateman and Ryan Reynolds.



Live Championship Boxing
9.40pm
Nick Blackwell v Chris Eubank Jr. Coverage of the bout for the British Middleweight title, which takes place at SSE Arena in London. Blackwell is attempting to make the third defence of the title he claimed by beating John Ryder, which was followed by victories over Damon Jones and Jack Arnfield.

BBC1	
6.00	Breakfast.
10.00	Saturday Kitchen Live. Paul Ainsworth, Claude Bosi, Vivek Singh and Sat Bains join James Martin for his last appearance as the show's host.
11.30	MasterChef. The first quarter-final. (R)
12.00	BBC News; Weather.
12.10	Football Focus. Dan Walker and guests look ahead to the international friendlies.
12.50	Saturday Sportsday. A look ahead at the day's events.
1.00	Can Seb Coe Save Athletics? Sebastian Coe outlines his plans to clean up the IAAF, and athletics in general.
1.30	Live Athletics. The World Half Marathon Championships. Coverage of the 22nd staging of the event, which takes place in Cardiff. Mo Farah will be going for gold as his Olympic preparations continue.
3.30	FILM: The Princess and the Frog (2009). Disney animated musical fantasy, with the voice of Anika Noni Rose.
5.00	BBC News.
5.10	Midlands Today; Weather.
5.20	Pointless Celebrities. Another star-studded edition of the unorthodox general knowledge quiz.
6.10	Can't Touch This. New series. Zoe Ball and Ashley Banjo present the game show in which 16 contestants battle their way through an obstacle course filled with prizes they must touch to claim.
7.00	The Voice UK. The remaining contestants conquer their nerves and take to the stage in the first live show of the series, with viewers at home deciding which acts will progress to the semi-finals.
8.55	The National Lottery Live. Welsh singer, radio broadcaster and TV presenter Aled Jones joins Gaby Roslin to push the Lotto button and reveal the all-important winning numbers.
9.05	The Voice UK. Emma Willis and Marvin Humes announce the results of this week's public vote, revealing which of the eight remaining contestants will be progressing through to the semi-final.
9.35	Casualty. Connie becomes embroiled in a convicted murderer's plan to escape from prison, and Big Mac tries to help his old tormentor Mercedes see the error of her ways.
10.25	BBC News; Weather; National Lottery Update.
10.45	FILM: Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull (2008). The globe-trotting archaeologist races against Soviet agents to find a mysterious artefact of untold power. Action adventure sequel, starring Harrison Ford and Cate Blanchett.
12.40	FILM: Biker Boyz (2003). The son of a dead mechanic aims to honour his father's memory by beating a rival in an illegal motorcycle racing contest. Action drama, starring Laurence Fishburne and Derek Luke.
3.25	(BST) Weather for the Week Ahead.
3.30	BBC News.

BBC2	
8.05	FILM: The Captive Heart (1946). Second World War drama, starring Michael Redgrave and Jack Warner.
9.40	The Women's Football Show. (R)
10.10	Homes Under the Hammer. Properties in south-west London, Kent and the North East. (R)
11.10	Natural World: Polar Bears and Grizzlies - Bears on Top of the World. Comparing the fortunes of polar bears with grizzlies. (R)
12.00	Rick Stein: From Venice to Istanbul. The chef crosses the Adriatic Sea to Croatia. (R)
1.00	War Films, Talking Pictures. Sylvia Symms revisits the British war films released in the aftermath of the Second World War.
1.45	FILM: The Heroes of Telemark (1965). Second World War thriller, starring Kirk Douglas and Richard Harris.
3.50	Flog It! From the Imperial War Museum Duxford. (R)
4.15	Big Dreams Small Spaces. A Worthing couple transform their overgrown plot into a family garden. (R)
5.15	Gardeners' World. Joe Swift visits a major bedding plant grower. (R)
5.45	Easter from King's. Easter-themed music, performed by the Choir of King's College, Cambridge.
7.00	Tribes, Predators & Me. Gordon Buchanan learns how tribal cultures hunt and live alongside dangerous animals, beginning by joining the Waorani tribe in Ecuador as they search for anacondas. (R)
8.00	Perry and Croft: Made in Britain. The celebration of comedy writing duo David Croft and Jimmy Perry continues with an examination of how their sitcoms chronicled British people's attitudes to love and sex. (R)
8.30	Dad's Army. Mainwaring orders his blundering platoon to guard the bank's money until repairs on the bomb-damaged vault are completed. Comedy, starring Arthur Lowe and John Le Mesurier. (R)
9.00	Being the Brontës. 116279 853mey, Helen Oyeyemi and Lucy Mangan mark the 200th anniversary of Charlotte Brontë's birth by immersing themselves in the lives of the author and her sisters.
10.00	FILM: Jane Eyre (2011). A governess falls in love with her mysterious employer, only to discover he is concealing a terrible secret. Period drama, with Mia Wasikowska, Michael Fassbender, Jamie Bell and Judi Dench.
11.50	FILM: Passion (2012). Premiere. An advertising executive steals her protégé's ideas, setting in motion a lethal game of oneupmanship. Brian De Palma's thriller, with Rachel McAdams and Noomi Rapace.
2.25	(BST) Monteverdi in Mantua: The Genius of the Vespers. (R)
3.25	The World's Most Expensive Stolen Paintings. (R)
4.25	Mozart in Prague: Rolando Villazon on Don Giovanni. (R)
5.25	This is BBC2.
5.55	Great British Garden Revival. (R)

ITV	
6.00	CITV: Bottom Knocker Street 6.10 Bottom Knocker Street 6.25 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures 6.35 Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures 6.45 Sooty 7.00 Super 4 7.10 Looped
7.30	Scrambled!: Scrambled! Two hours of children's fun.
7.35	Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. Chaotic cartoon capers, voiced by Rowan Atkinson. (R)
7.50	Scrambled!: Horrid Henry. Cartoon about a mischievous youngster. (R)
8.10	Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters. Animated comedy. (R)
8.30	Scrambled!: Jessie. Disney sitcom, starring Debby Ryan.
9.05	Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show. Cat and mouse adventures. (R)
9.25	Thunderbirds Are Go. A heat-seeking SAT-MINE activates and locks onto TB3's heat signature. (R)
9.50	Thunderbirds Are Go. Lady Penelope, Parker and Gordon become trapped in an ancient temple. (R)
10.15	Murder, She Wrote. Jessica reminisces about an old mystery. (R)
11.10	The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)
12.15	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
12.20	The Jeremy Kyle Show. Guests air their differences. (R)
1.25	Judge Rinder. Real-life cases in a studio courtroom. (R)
2.25	The Chase. Quiz show, hosted by Bradley Walsh. (R)
3.25	Planet's Got Talent. Clips from the global Got Talent franchise. (R)
3.55	FILM: Free Willy 3: The Rescue (1997). Family adventure, starring Jason James Richter.
5.35	ITV News Central; Weather.
5.45	ITV News and Weather.
6.00	Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. Star Wars actor Mark Hamill serves as the guest announcer as the hosts race mini motorbikes, and Little Ant and Dec meet the cast of West End musical Billy Elliot.
7.30	Live International Football. Germany v England (Kick-off 7.45pm). Mark Pougatch presents coverage of the friendly encounter between the old rivals, which takes place at the Olympiastadion in Berlin.
10.00	The Jonathan Ross Show. Star Wars actress Carrie Fisher, comedian Russell Howard and soprano Katherine Jenkins join Jonathan in the studio for a chat.
11.05	ITV News and Weather; Weather.
11.20	International Football Highlights. Germany v England. Mark Pougatch presents the best of the action from the friendly encounter between the old rivals, which took place at the Olympiastadion in Berlin.
12.15	Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
4.00	(BST) Murder, She Wrote. A bedridden Jessica accidentally overhears a murder plot on the telephone - but is unable to convince anyone that the threat is real. (R)

Channel 4	
6.15	How I Met Your Mother. Barney tests his womanising tactics on Ted. (R)
6.40	How I Met Your Mother. The pals race one another to a restaurant. (R)
7.05	Mountain Biking: The Pioneer. Action from the seven-day stage race that took place in New Zealand.
8.00	Everybody Loves Raymond. Ray and Debra spend a weekend away. (R)
8.30	Everybody Loves Raymond. Debra gets a job. (R)
9.00	The Morning Line. Gina Harding presents a look ahead to this afternoon's racing at Haydock Park.
10.00	Marvel's Agents of SHIELD. Coulson is more determined than ever to get to Gideon Malick.
11.00	The Superhumans Show. With extreme wheelchair athlete Aaron Fotheringham.
11.30	The Big Bang Theory. The boys are challenged to a robot duel. (R)
12.00	The Big Bang Theory. Sheldon develops a scientific procedure for making friends. (R)
12.25	The Simpsons. Ned Flanders opens a shop. (R)
1.00	The Simpsons. Bart is befriended by mobsters. (R)
1.30	Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Haydock Park and Kempton Park.
4.00	Channel 4 Racing: Dubai World Cup. Live coverage of the world's most lucrative flat meeting.
5.30	Speed with Guy Martin. A daring attempt to set a world speed record for a hovercraft. (R)
6.30	Channel 4 News.
7.00	The World's Weirdest Weather. The influence of strange weather on the natural world, examining the factors that create caves of sapphires and blue lava, and lead to gatherings of walrus. Previously seen on More4.
8.00	Shakespeare's Tomb. Documentary revealing the results of a two-year-long investigation into William Shakespeare's grave in Stratford-upon-Avon, which culminated with some surprising finds.
9.00	FILM: The Heat (2013). Premiere. An ambitious FBI agent and an unconventional cop are forced to work together to bring a drug kingpin to justice. Action comedy, with Sandra Bullock and Melissa McCarthy.
11.25	FILM: The Change-Up (2011). Two friends envy each other's lives, but when they magically switch bodies, they both learn that the other does not have it so easy. Comedy, with Jason Bateman and Ryan Reynolds.
2.30	(BST) Hollyoaks. Omnibus. Ste and Harry are thrown out of the McQueens, and try to find another place to stay. Elsewhere, DS Thorpe is concerned that Jason's personal life is affecting his work. (R)
4.40	Sarah Beeny's How to Sell Your Home. The property guru meets people selling their homes online. (R)
5.05	Location, Location, Location. Kirstie Allsopp and Phil Spencer head to Chelmsford, where they hope to find a £1million home for an entrepreneur and his wife. (R)

Channel 5	
6.00	Milkshake!: Peppa Pig 6.05 Bananas in Pyjamas 6.20 Bob the Builder 6.30 Ticky Toc 6.40 Quack and Quack 6.55 Make Way for Noddy 7.05 Paw Patrol: Pups Save the Easter Egg Hunt 7.30 Little Princess 7.45 Pip Ahoy! 8.00 Blaze and the Monster Machines 8.25 Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom 8.40 Wanda and the Alien
8.55	The Fairly OddParents. Mom and Dad become convinced Poof is an alien super baby.
9.30	The Saturday Show: Easter Special. Matt Barbet and Gaby Roslin present an Easter-themed edition of the show.
11.30	Police Interceptors. Dams and the team tackle a supermarket gunman. (R)
12.30	FILM: Star Trek V: The Final Frontier (1989). Sci-fi adventure sequel, starring William Shatner.
2.35	FILM: Columbo: By Dawn's Early Light (1974). Crime drama, starring Peter Falk and Patrick McGeehan.
4.30	FILM: Columbo: Murder, Smoke and Shadows (1989). Crime drama, starring Peter Falk.
6.20	NCIS: Los Angeles. Sam reassumes a former identity to trace the leader of a Yemeni terrorist group, but things become complicated when he has to guard the son of a Saudi prince.
7.05	NCIS: New Orleans. The Big Easy's annual Red Dress Run is brought to a halt by the discovery of the body of a dead petty officer, whose demise is linked to a new drug sweeping through New Orleans.
8.00	NCIS. The team investigates the murder of a Navy commander's wife, determining whether it is linked to her role as a therapist, or is instead an act of terrorism.
8.55	5 News Weekend.
9.00	Goal Rush: Football League Tonight. A round-up of all the goals and talking points from League One and League Two, with fixtures including Burton Albion v Oldham Athletic, and Bristol Rovers v Cambridge United.
9.40	Live Championship Boxing. Nick Blackwell v Chris Eubank Jr. Coverage of the bout for the British Middleweight title, which takes place at SSE Arena in London.
12.15	SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
4.10	(BST) Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. Benson and Stabler are called in to investigate when a former opera singer with multiple sclerosis is found beaten and raped in her home. (R)
5.00	Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. A journalist is found dead in her bed with an X carved into her cheek, and the crime resembles those committed by a serial rapist and killer from the 1970s who was never caught. (R)
5.45	Chinese Food in Minutes. Two cheesemongers from Borough Market ask for help to spice up their repertoires. Ching-He Huang obliges with sea bass steamed in wine, a spicy beef dish and hot-and-sour soup. (R)



Antiques Roadshow

8pm
Fiona Bruce and the team head to the Royal Hall in Harrogate, with Alastair Dickenson giving his highest valuation in 20 years on the show. Plus, the emotional story of a sapphire ring left to a young man by a recently departed friend, and the family history behind Betty's Tea Rooms.



Tribes, Predators & Me

9pm
Gordon Buchanan joins a group of Bushmen in Botswana's Kalahari Desert to learn their ancient secrets for surviving on foot among wild lions. They teach him how to make fire, find honey, and gather water from desert plants, and the filmmaker watches as they hunt with poisoned arrows.



The Chase Celebrity Special

7pm
New series. Bradley Walsh presents as Coronation Street's Hayley Tamaddon, football star Geoff Hurst, comedian Rob Beckett and presenter Gaby Roslin pit their wits against ruthless quiz geniuses in the hope of winning a potential prize pot worth thousands of pounds for charity.



Indian Summers

9pm
Ralph tries to gain the favour of the Maharajah of Patiala to advance his standing, but Cynthia is thrown by an encounter with the ruler's troublesome mistress. As Aafin deals with the consequences of a recent tragedy, he is tasked with umpiring a cricket match between British and Indian politicians.



Penn & Teller: Fool Us in Vegas

8pm
Jonathan Ross introduces more magic acts determined to dazzle the duo, featuring card tricks set to instrumental music, a performance of prediction and a spirited illusion. Plus, Teller performs a trick with a ball and string.

BBC1

- 6.00 **Breakfast.**
- 9.00 **BBC News.**
- 10.00 **Easter Worship 2016.** A live celebration to mark Easter Sunday from the Abbey and Cathedral Church of St Alban, led by the Rt Rev Dr Alan Smith, Bishop of St Albans.
- 11.00 **Urbi et Orbi.** The Pope's traditional Easter blessing for 2016.
- 11.25 **Homes Under the Hammer.** Lucy Alexander, Dion Dublin and Martin Roberts explore properties about to be auctioned. (R)
- 12.10 **Bargain Hunt.** Catherine Southon and Paul Laidlaw head to Edinburgh to help teams of forensic scientists and lecturers find potentially profitable items to take to auction. (R)
- 1.00 **BBC News; Weather.**
- 1.15 **Father Brown.** The priest's priceless Blue Cross is targeted by an infamous criminal. (R)
- 2.00 **Escape to the Country.** An American expat couple search for a home in Surrey. (R)
- 2.25 **Rowing: The Boat Races.** Clare Balding presents live coverage of the men's and women's University Boat Races on the River Thames, as Oxford aim to retain their titles against traditional rivals Cambridge.
- 5.00 **A Question of Sport.** With Louise Hazel, Gary Pallister, Chris Walker-Hobborn and Ricky Hatton. (R)
- 5.30 **Songs of Praise.** Behind the scenes on a community passion play.
- 6.05 **Paul O'Grady: The Sally Army and Me.** New series. The presenter works alongside the Salvation Army's volunteers in a variety of roles, and reflects on how the charity has always been a part of his life.
- 6.35 **BBC News.**
- 6.50 **Midlands Today; Weather.**
- 7.00 **Countryfile.** Rural developments in Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, featuring a farm that keeps turkeys for their eggs and a three-year-old girl getting to grips with lambing.
- 8.00 **Antiques Roadshow.** Fiona Bruce and the team head to the Royal Hall in Harrogate, with Alastair Dickenson giving his highest valuation in 20 years on the show.
- 9.00 **The Night Manager.** Pine fears his cover will be blown when he is forced to return to the hotel where he first became aware of Roper. Burr faces the consequences of her mission. Last in the series.
- 10.00 **BBC News.**
- 10.20 **Midlands Today; Weather.**
- 10.30 **Would I Lie to You?** Team captains David Mitchell and Lee Mack are joined by Rhod Gilbert, Sally Phillips, Des O'Connor and Tess Daly on the comedy panel show. Hosted by Rob Brydon. (R)
- 11.00 **FILM: Little Fockers (2010).** A father of twins invites his family to his kids' birthday party and tries to finally prove his worth to his father-in-law. Comedy sequel, with Ben Stiller.
- 12.30 **Weather for the Week Ahead.**
- 12.35 **BBC News.**

BBC2

- 6.55 **This Farming Life.** Ex-barrister Sandy Granville gathers in his sheep from the moor. (R)
- 7.55 **Gardeners' World.** The art of kokedama and the Cape primrose. (R)
- 8.25 **An Island Parish.** Life on Unst in Shetland. (R)
- 8.55 **Countryfile.** Matt Baker and Ellie Harrison explore Ashdown Forest in East Sussex. (R)
- 9.55 **Saturday Kitchen Best Bites.** Highlights of the series.
- 11.25 **The Best Dishes Ever.** Spicy and exotic dishes. (R)
- 11.55 **The Best Dishes Ever.** Ingredients that work together beautifully. (R)
- 12.25 **FILM: King of Kings (1961).** Biblical epic, starring Jeffrey Hunter.
- 3.00 **Flog It!** Paul Martin and the experts delve into Liverpool's musical heritage. (R)
- 3.30 **Tim Rice – A Life in Song.** A concert celebrating the work of the Oscar-winning lyricist. (R)
- 5.00 **The Secret History of My Family.** Rival street gangs in 1890s Salford and the magistrate determined to stamp them out. (R)
- 6.00 **Springwatch at Easter 2016.** Chris Packham, Michaela Strachan and Martin Hughes-Games present the annual series charting the fortunes of British wildlife during the changing of the seasons.
- 7.00 **Gareth Malone's Great Choir Reunion.** Gareth tracks down some of the singers from the Trinity Wives and the workplace choirs he formed in Sing While You Work, before rehearsals begin for a reunion concert. (R)
- 8.00 **Natural Born Winners.** New series. Athletes Donovan Bailey, James Toseland, Gareth Thomas and Iwan Thomas compete in demanding sports, beginning with fell running against horse riders in Wales.
- 9.00 **Tribes, Predators & Me.** Gordon Buchanan joins a group of Bushmen in Botswana's Kalahari Desert to learn their ancient secrets for surviving on foot among wild lions.
- 10.00 **Thirteen.** Ivy is arrested after her DNA is found in the cellar. Christina begs the police to be allowed to speak to her, and finally discovers the shocking truth behind her disappearance.
- 11.00 **The People v OJ Simpson: American Crime Story.** More missteps by the investigating detectives are revealed. (R)
- 11.50 **FILM: Youth Without Youth (2007).** An academic whose youth is restored after being struck by lightning goes round the world on a decades-long journey of discovery. Drama, starring Tim Roth and Alexandra Maria Lara.
- 1.50 **Sign Zone: Countryfile.** Matt Baker and Ellie Harrison explore Ashdown Forest in East Sussex. (R)
- 2.45 **Sign Zone: Holby City.** A life-changing birthday gift leaves Morven reeling. (R)
- 3.35 **FILM: Hockney (2014).** Documentary about artist David Hockney.
- 5.30 **This is BBC2.** Preview of upcoming programmes.

ITV

- 6.00 **CITV: Bottom Kocker Street 6.15** Bottom Kocker Street **6.25** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures **6.45** Signed Stories: Share a Story **6.50** Sooty **7.05** Super 4 **7.15** Looped
- 7.30 **Scrambled!: Scrambled!** Two hours of children's fun.
- 7.35 **Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series.** Chaotic cartoon capers, voiced by Rowan Atkinson. (R)
- 7.50 **Scrambled!: Horrid Henry.** Cartoon about a mischievous youngster. (R)
- 8.10 **Scrambled!: Nerds & Monsters.** Animated comedy. (R)
- 8.30 **Scrambled!: Bear Grylls Survival School.** Children are taught to survive in the wild.
- 9.05 **Scrambled!: The Tom & Jerry Show.** Cat and mouse adventures. (R)
- 9.25 **Thunderbirds Are Go.** Scott and Alan travel to the moon. (R)
- 9.55 **Thunderbirds Are Go.** Burglars kidnap Lady Penelope and Aunt Sylvia. (R)
- 10.20 **Murder, She Wrote.** A property developer is murdered. (R)
- 11.25 **The Jeremy Kyle Show.** Guests air their differences. (R)
- 12.25 **ITV News and Weather; Weather.**
- 12.35 **FILM: Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory (1971).** Musical fantasy, with Gene Wilder.
- 2.35 **Big Star's Little Star.** With Shaun Ryder, Diane Parish and Mikey Graham. (R)
- 3.35 **Off Their Rockers.** Rosie loses a rather unusual pet. (R)
- 4.10 **FILM: A View to a Kill (1985).** James Bond adventure, starring Roger Moore.
- 6.35 **ITV News Central; Weather.**
- 6.45 **ITV News and Weather.**
- 7.00 **The Chase Celebrity Special.** New series. Hayley Tamaddon, Geoff Hurst, Rob Beckett and Gaby Roslin answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to take on quiz geniuses and secure a cash prize for charity.
- 8.00 **Our Queen at 90.** Members of the royal family pay tribute to Elizabeth II, and politicians, celebrities and ordinary people from all over the world talk about their experiences of meeting her.
- 10.00 **ITV News and Weather; Weather.**
- 10.15 **The Road to Coronation Street.** Drama telling the story of how the long-running soap was born as creator Tony Warren (David Dawson) faced opposition from ITV bosses. Jane Horrocks and Jessie Wallace co-star. (R)
- 11.55 **Premiership Rugby Union.** Highlights of the latest round of fixtures in the top flight, which included Saracens v Exeter Chiefs, Gloucester v Bath and Worcester Warriors v London Irish.
- 12.45 **Jackpot247.** Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
- 3.00 **ITV Nightscreen.** Text-based information service.
- 5.05 **The Jeremy Kyle Show.** The host invites guests to air their differences over family and relationship issues, and gives them his own advice. (R)

Channel 4

- 6.00 **How I Met Your Mother.** Marshall feels guilty about firing his assistant. (R)
- 6.25 **How I Met Your Mother.** Ted runs into Zoey at a black-tie fundraiser. (R)
- 6.45 **Everybody Loves Raymond.** Debra and Ray vow to change their ways. (R)
- 7.10 **Everybody Loves Raymond.** Robert takes Debra out dancing. (R)
- 7.35 **Everybody Loves Raymond.** Robert and Amy get back together. (R)
- 8.00 **Frasier.** Part one of two. Frasier says goodbye to Charlotte. (R)
- 8.30 **Frasier.** Part two of two. Last-ever episode of the sitcom. (R)
- 9.00 **Frasier.** The shrink reads about himself in a novel. (R)
- 9.30 **Sunday Brunch.** With guests Ross Kemp, Tom Rosenthal and Ryan Sampson.
- 12.30 **George Clarke's Amazing Spaces.** A UFO-styled pre-fabricated Futuro house. (R)
- 1.30 **The Big Bang Theory.** Leonard and Penny endure an awkward night at the cinema. (R)
- 2.00 **The Big Bang Theory.** Stuart asks Amy out on a date. (R)
- 2.25 **The Big Bang Theory.** Leonard confronts a bully from his past. (R)
- 2.50 **FILM: The Great Mouse Detective (1986).** Premiere. Evil Professor Ratigan kidnaps a toy-maker, but sleuth Basil of Baker Street comes to the rescue. Animated adventure, with the voices of Vincent Price and Barrie Ingham.
- 4.25 **FILM: Hop (2011).** Part-animated comedy, starring James Marsden.
- 6.15 **Ice Age: The Great Egg-Scapade.** Short animated comedy, featuring the characters from the movie series. Sid looks after some eggs waiting to hatch, but a villainous rabbit steals them all.
- 6.40 **Channel 4 News.**
- 7.00 **The Secret Life of the Zoo.** With members of the elephant family at risk from a virus, Chester Zoo's team tries to combat the illness, while Mac the stallion zebra is introduced to the zoo's three mares. (R)
- 8.00 **Great Canal Journeys.** Timothy West and Prunella Scales follow the ancient routes of the Vikings and visit Stockholm, before they head out into the far-flung islands of the archipelago.
- 9.00 **Indian Summers.** Ralph tries to befriend a Maharajah to advance his standing, but Cynthia is thrown by an encounter with the ruler's mistress. The Dalal family are drawn into Aafin's secrets.
- 10.00 **Gogglebox.** Capturing the households' instant reactions to what they are watching on TV from the comfort of their own sofas. (R)
- 11.00 **FILM: Inglourious Basterds (2009).** Second World War adventure, starring Brad Pitt.
- 1.45 **Embarrassing Bodies Down Under.** (R)
- 2.40 **Come Dine with Me.** (R)
- 3.10 **Come Dine with Me.** (R)
- 3.40 **Come Dine with Me.** (R)
- 4.05 **Come Dine with Me.** (R)
- 4.35 **Come Dine with Me.** (R)
- 5.05 **Selling Houses with Amanda Lamb.** (R)

Channel 5

- 6.00 **Milkshake!: Peppa Pig 6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas **6.20** Bob the Builder **6.30** Tickle Toc **6.40** Zack and Quack **6.55** Make Way for Noddy **7.05** Paw Patrol **7.20** Little Princess **7.30** Pip Ahoy! **7.45** Blaze and the Monster Machines **8.10** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom **8.30** Wanda and the Alien **8.45** Toby's Travelling Circus
- 8.55 **FILM: Thomas & Friends: Sodor's Legend of the Lost Treasure (2015).** Animated adventure, featuring the voice of Joseph May.
- 10.05 **The Fairly OddParents.** Double bill. Timmy has to look after his dad's prized sports car.
- 10.40 **Goal Rush: Football League Tonight.** A round-up of all the goals from League One and League Two. (R)
- 11.20 **Now That's Funny!** A baby has an odd reaction to bacon. (R)
- 12.25 **Pets Make You Laugh Out Loud.** Clips of foul-mouthed parrots and a water-skiing squirrel. (R)
- 1.25 **Dogs Make You Laugh Out Loud.** The internet's most popular videos featuring dogs. (R)
- 2.25 **FILM: Watership Down (1978).** Animated drama, with the voice of John Hurt.
- 4.10 **Greatest Animated Movies.** A countdown of classic cartoon films.
- 7.00 **Now That's Funny!** Cats battle it out with dogs and a man displays a talent for summoning animals. Plus, people failing to look where they are going and the latest Stars of the Week.
- 8.00 **Penn & Teller: Fool Us in Vegas.** Jonathan Ross introduces more magic acts, including card tricks set to instrumental music and a performance of prediction. Plus, Teller performs an illusion with a ball and string.
- 8.55 **5 News Weekend.**
- 9.00 **FILM: Due Date (2010).** Premiere. An uptight architect trying to get home before his wife gives birth makes a disastrous journey with an oddball actor. Comedy, with Robert Downey Jr and Zach Galifianakis.
- 11.00 **FILM: The Bounty Hunter (2010).** A bail enforcement agent is assigned to track down his own ex-wife, a reporter who is investigating a murder cover-up. Action comedy, starring Gerard Butler and Jennifer Aniston.
- 1.05 **SuperCasino.** Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team.
- 3.10 **The Tube: Going Underground.** Documentary going behind the scenes on the London transport network. (R)
- 4.00 **Wildlife SOS.** The work of an animal sanctuary. (R)
- 4.25 **Wildlife SOS.** The work of an animal sanctuary. (R)
- 4.50 **Great Artists.** The life and work of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. (R)
- 5.20 **Divine Designs.** Paul Binski examines the structures of Lincoln and Wells cathedrals. (R)
- 5.45 **Angels of Jarm.** The children make cards. (R)
- 5.50 **Angels of Jarm.** (R)

Community's plan to buy local pub fails

A COMMUNITY has been left disappointed after valiant bids to buy their local pub fell flat.

Those behind the appeal had secured £60,000 in pledges to buy the Cross Keys in Kinnerley, near Oswestry, but it was well short of the £300,000 needed.

John Dyson, chairman of the Cross Keys Action Committee, said the group had put in more than 2,000 hours of their time to try and buy the pub.

He said: "To be honest we weren't overly confident as we fell a long way short of the money we needed but at least we can say we tried, we put in hours and hours of our time trying."

"Of course the community is very disappointed as we aren't sure if it's going to open again but there's no animosity, now it's for the owners. It just depends on what they want or can do."

The action committee were unable to secure grants for the building, which closed more than two years ago following a fire, due to issues with the length of the lease. The pub was bought by local builder Les Jones and his wife Norma last October, to save it from development. The committee spent months urging villagers and other people in the surrounding area to invest so that it can buy the building, refurbish it and reopen it as a community-owned pub.

The building also required extensive refurbishment and the group had identified a number of funding opportunities to secure cash for repairs, extensions and updating the property.

Mr Dyson added: "I can't now spread a message of optimism or pessimism because it is down to the owners. It's a pity there was a problem over the length of the lease but I'm pleased that we tried."

Police stations 'to be shared'

POLICE stations across Shropshire will be shared with other organisations to cut costs.

Agreements are being drawn up to secure new bases for officers in towns and villages. In some cases existing stations will continue to be used.

Proposals have been put forward to ensure officers retain a presence in Oswestry, Shifnal, Whitchurch and Much Wenlock. But no arrangements have yet been confirmed for policing teams based in Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, Church Stretton and Pontesbury and discussions are ongoing with local groups.

Bill Longmore, West Mercia's police and crime commissioner, said the deals were a sign of progress being made to improve policing in the county despite continuous pressure on budgets.

He also said the West Mercia force now had 74 more officers compared to when he took up his role as commissioner in 2012.

There are currently no other estate changes expected in Market Drayton, Wem or Highley.

More than £1 million has been saved by either selling off or leasing out police stations across the county since 2013. Annual savings in running costs on top of this will total tens of thousands of pounds each year, according to police.

Cabaret evening will raise cash

A ROTARY club will hold a fundraising dinner and cabaret night.

The Cambrian Rotary Club in Oswestry will hold the event at the Wynnstay Hotel in the town on May 13 with proceeds going to youth projects and other local charities. The event is a black tie event with a three-course meal and entertainment supplied by the Very Nice Production Company. Tickets are £35.

President Mike Lade said: "We have chosen to support the local youth projects because youth services have had the severest of cuts to their funding over the last few years and the town has already lost the Youth Cafe in Oswald Road.

"It's looking more and more like the voluntary sector and charities need to back fill some of the funding loss otherwise the young people of our town will not have safe, supervised and friendly places to meet and socialise in."

Tickets are available from the reception of the Wynnstay Hotel and www.oswestrycambrianrc.co.uk

Sport Relief event well supported by fundraisers



Fundraisers of all ages took part in the Sport Relief run at Park Hall near Oswestry

PEOPLE all over the Oswestry and Welshpool area did their bit for Sport Relief last week by taking part in a whole host of fundraising activities.

Among the many events staged was a Sport Relief run staged by The New Saints Foundation team at Park Hall near Oswestry.

The foundation team welcomed around 70 participants for this year's Sport Relief run. Runners taking part were aged between six and 70 years old.

The participants were given the choice of either completing a one mile, three mile or a six mile run.

Organisers said they even had five people complete the whole mile while hula hooping.

The race was opened by Oswestry Town Mayor Peter Cherrington who decided to run the mile himself.

Organisers said there was live music provided for the charitable event by Mandola Hangover from Wrexham who ensured a great



Some of the fundraisers hula hooped their way around the course

atmosphere. The Oswestry Borderland Rotary Club donated its marshalling services to ensure the route was safe for runners and the event was supported by Rocking Horse Studios of Oswestry.

Sainsbury's of Oswestry also donated goodie bags to provide to the runners.

Naomi Stocker, one of the organisers, said: "I'm delighted as to how well the day went."

"We were able to showcase our new football inflatable, and we raised money for both Sport

Relief, a charity close to our hearts, and for the foundation too.

"I want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who took part to make this our best Sport Relief event yet. Thank you to our volunteers at Borderland Rotary, Mondola Hangover, Oswestry Sainsbury's and Rocking Horse Studios. I would also like to thank our team at The Foundation who were a huge support."

"We hope to build on this event for two years' time, to make it bigger and better."

Packed literary festival is a big hit with all ages



Cathy Rentzenbrink, Owen Sheers and Peter Owen



Crowds flocked to many of this year's Oswestry LitFest events to hear from the experts

Report by Lisa O'Brien

A COMIC book artist and an editorial director were among the writers, storytellers and performers who helped to draw hundreds of people to this year's Oswestry LitFest.

The four-day annual festival, which celebrates the cream of Britain's literary landscape, drew to a close on Sunday when former Blue Peter presenter Janet Ellis came to the town to speak about her debut novel, *The Butcher's Hook*.

The mother of pop star Sophie Ellis-Bexter spoke about her writing and gave a question and answer session on the book, which is set during the summer of 1763 in Georgian London, at the Wynnstay Hotel in Oswestry.

Among those appearing at the festival on Saturday were Francesca Main, editorial director at publishing firm, Picador, and literary agent Jo Unwin who pulled back the curtain on a book's journey from initial draft to bestseller.

They were interviewed by Cathy Rentzenbrink, an author and associate editor of *The Bookseller* magazine, at the same venue.

Meanwhile, Simon Furman, a comic book artist who has worked on the much-loved *Transformers* series, brought a superhero workshop to The Centre, in Oak Street.

Other highlights included the arrival of Emergency Poet Deborah Alma who set up shop on Festival Square.

This year's Wilfred Owen Lecture was delivered by playwright and broadcaster Owen Sheers who was welcomed to the festival by Cathy Rentzenbrink and Peter Owen, Wilfred Owen's nephew.



Picador editorial director Francesca Main at LitFest



Roz Munro-Derry meets Emergency Poet Deborah Alma, right

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You may have recently seen a sign-written Fiat 500 supplied by T.J. Vickers bedecked with the Promise Dreams logo out and about on local roads. It's used by the charity's team to drive to fundraising events throughout the area in order to promote this fantastic raffle for such a worthy cause, so please do give them a wave if you spot the car.

The winner will be drawn on Saturday April 16 so there's still a little bit of time left, but not too much, to buy your tickets by visiting T.J. Vickers' showrooms in Shrewsbury and Telford. Alternatively, you can obtain your raffle tickets by contacting Promise Dreams.

Promise Dreams is a charity that accepts applications for children from birth to eighteen.

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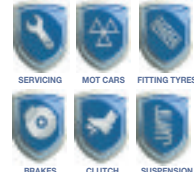
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DS 3 stands out in crowd

By **Graham Breeze**

It's taken some time but now you really can tell a DS 3 from a Citroen, with the newly launched Cabrio targeting Mini sales in the UK.

There wasn't much difference since the separation of the posher DS brand from Citroen back in 2014 but now DS3 has been given a proper facelift and I was lucky enough to be in the first group of UK journalists to drive the new Cabrio.

DS Automobiles was formed to revive the tradition of premium vehicles, targeting customers keen to express their individual taste and is surprisingly well priced.

The range starts at £13,995 and £16,295 for the stylish Cabrio and there are five trim levels – Chic, Elegance, Prestige, Ultra Prestige and Performance.

The biggest change is up front where a DS-badged hexagonal grille has replaced the Citroen design and there are smarter headlights using a combination of LED and Xenons to give a new look.

Attractive new alloys have been added and there's plenty of personalisation options with 10 roof decals and four different roof finishes available on the Cabrio as part of a huge choice of colour and trim combinations.

Inside you are quickly aware that DS 3 is in the 21st century with a myriad of dash colour combinations to pick from and all the gizmo bits we are becoming to expect as standard these days. That means you get a

7" touchscreen featuring Apple CarPlay and MirrorLink smartphone connectivity.

A new DS Connect Box option includes an SOS and Assistance Pack and a remote tracking system, while safety tech such as Active City Braking added across the range.

DS bosses were happy with the engine range, so buyers can still take their pick from the 1.2-litre PureTech three-cylinder turbo petrol, plus two four-cylinder THP turbo petrols and two BlueHDi diesels.

But there will soon be a sporty new addition. The DS 3 Racing in both hatchback and Cabrio forms, newly named as DS Performance.

Brakes

The active city brake system helps to prevent minor collisions at low speeds with a short-range sensor, located at the top of the wind-screen, picking up obstacles such as a stationary vehicle. It brakes at speeds of up to 18mph without the driver having to touch the brake pedal.

New DS 3 is also equipped with front and rear parking sensors, a reversing camera with visual indicator guide lines on the 7-inch screen and hill start assist.

It's a comfortable ride up-front but you need a pair of very short legs to enjoy the ride in the back over any distance and there is really only room for two.

Access to the boot is poor on the Cabrio, with a narrow gateway and there is no chance of finding room for the golf clubs in there, despite the claim of 245 litres of space.

Handling has improved thanks to the suspension being lowered by 15mm and the front and rear tracks widened, so there is a real sporty feel about this new DS and you



DS Automobiles was formed to revive the tradition of premium vehicles

can open or close the roof at speeds of up to 70mph – rain prevented that test though.

There was an impressive 126mph to speed from the Cabrio Prestige, three cylinder 130hp model on test with six-speed manual gearbox, which had an on-the-road price tag of £21,095.

There was 0-62mph in nine seconds and emission levels of 105g/km, putting the car in the Band B road fund licence category,

which means a benefit in kind rating of 16 per cent.

Running costs will also be kept down by average fuel consumption of 62.8mpg.

There's no doubt that this DS 3 stands out in the crowd and will attract the buyer with an eye on individuality but there's an awful lot of opposition in the supermini sector and it might just be a hard slog achieving sales targets in 2016.

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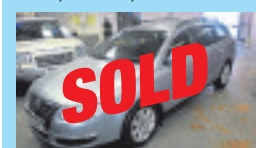
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2010 10	VOLVO XC90 2.4 DS ACTIVE AUTOMATIC 7 Seats, Half Leather, Heated Seats, Metallic Black, 57,000 miles, FSH	£14,499
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TNS Ladies hit back to get back on the title trail

AFTER dropping points the previous week, The New Saints Ladies returned to winning form with a 5-2 victory over Knowle Ladies to stay firmly on the title trail in the West Midlands Women's premier division.

This was the Saints' game in hand and they knew they had to get maximum points to maintain their lead at the top of the West Midlands Regional Premier League. It was their fourth time they have defeated their opponents this season.

After being held 2-2 by Leamington Lions the previous week, they did take long to put that disappointment behind them as Charlotte Canlett fired the Shropshire side into the lead.

The former American College player then doubled the advantage when firing into the net from just inside the penalty area.

Knowle then pulled a goal back when a corner was met by a bullet header that gave Ceri Evans in goal no chance of saving.

Header

The joy for the hosts was to be short lived, though, as straight from kick off top scorer Emily Ridge broke through and restored the Saints' two goal cushion.

Ridge went on to grab her second of the game to give TNS even more breathing space after breaking away from the defence before slotting past the goalkeeper once again.

Knowle hit back again when a corner was met by another powerful header leaving the Saints looking to regain the three goal cushion.

It was to be Laura Morris who would do this, racing down the left wing before cutting in to curl the ball into the bottom corner of the net to seal victory.

The Saints are well placed to land the crown, having gone four points clear at the top of the league with three games to play.

They now have a weekend off before they host their final home game of the season, when Wrockwardinne Wood travel to Park Hall Stadium on Sunday, April 3.

Super Saints in four-star league win

ST Martins gained sweet revenge for a defeat earlier in the campaign as they overcame Penncroft 4-1 to maintain their top three position in the West Midlands League division one.

Two goals from Callum Bennett helped seal the points at Park Hall as the Saints put the record straight after losing 3-1 on a tricky rain drenched surface back in late November.

Despite lying in the lower reaches of the table, Penncroft started well before the home side took the lead on 20 minutes when Jamie Hands finished off an excellent passing move.

Bennett then got his first goal of the game to double the lead at the break, but the visitors were back in the hunt on the hour when Oliver Obinna capitalised on a defensive slip to fire past keeper Jake Northwood.

But St Martins – who visit struggling Worcester Raiders on Saturday – were not going to be denied as they wrapped up the victory with two late goals.

After a good move down the left, Shawn Melusi curled in a third goal before Sam Nash set up Bennett to settle the issue with his second of the game.

A few days before, the Saints progressed to the third round of the first division cup with a 4-1 passage at Wrens Nest, and will now take on Shropshire rivals Wem at Park Hall.

Karl Bailey and Jamie Hands gave Ryan Butcher's side a two goal interval advantage and, despite the hosts pulling one back in the second period, Bailey, with his second, and Callum Bennett sealed an excellent win.

Rare defeat as TNS fail to mind the Gap

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

THE New Saints suffered their second defeat of the season at the hands of gap Connah's Quay – but still remain firmly on course to retain the Dafabet Welsh Premier title.

Having lost 2-0 at the Deeside Stadium back in January, the league leaders endured another disappointing visit as the Nomads ran out 2-1 winners to notch another notable scalp.

Despite taking a first half lead with a penalty from Chris Sergeant, the Saints were undone by two goals early in the second period through Les Davies and Callum Morris.

Although the home side had Danny Harrison dismissed, they held firm with 10 men for the last 20 minutes to boost their own hopes of European football this summer.

Although returning empty handed, it was not all gloom for the Saints who are still eight points clear at the top with four games remaining after closest rivals Bala Town were held 2-2 at Newtown.

Boss Craig Harrison admitted his side's failure to deal with the home side's aerial strength from a couple of set plays proved their downfall.

"It's a tough place to come, the pitch did not suit us, but that's no excuse as the two goals they scored had nothing to do with the pitch, the ball was in the air both times," he said.

"We need to deal with set plays better as a group, we knew they were a big, physical side and would be strong in that area.

"We could not really get the ball down and play, and could not build enough momentum."

Chances were hard to come by in an uneventful first half, TNS striker Scott Quigley having a good effort saved by John Danby while Ashley Ruane went close at the other end.

Superb save

The stalemate was almost broken five minutes before half time when Quigley was brought down on the edge of the box and Chris Marriot's free kick forced Danby into a superb save down to his left.

But TNS got their noses in front right on half time when Seargeant converted from the spot after being awarded a debatable penalty to give the pacesetters a valuable interval advantage.

Despite being buoyed by the goal, the Saints were pegged back in the 52nd minute when Davies managed to bundle in from close range.

The equaliser seemed to inspire the Nomads who then took the lead through Morris just six minutes later after finding space inside the box to head in from six yards out.

The hosts were holding firm, but their plans were disrupted when reduced to 10 men after Danny Harrison was dismissed for a two footed lunge on Simon Sponder, his second booking of the game.

Despite having the numerical advantage, TNS struggled to find a way back, and it was the home side who almost extended the lead when Davies' superb volley flew inches over the bar.

The Nomads have certainly proved the scourge of the Saints this season, having also secured a goalless draw at Park Hall.

The sides now meet in the semi-final of the Welsh Cup at Newtown's Latham Park in early April, with Andy Morrison's men certain to go into the game with plenty of confidence.

Town celebrating at the double



With the new kit are (from left): FC Oswestry chairman Ian Jones, Paul Jones, Arla site director, Town manager Nick Maguire and Kevin Williams Arla production manager and committee member while below at the club's gala dinner fundraiser are Town head coach Matt Williams, Tony Jo (guest comedian/compare), Tony Jo's driver, Town manager Nick Maguire and chairman Ian Jones



HOLDERS FC Oswestry Town booked their place in the Commander Ethelston Cup for the second successive year with a 3-2 victory in a physical encounter at Whitchurch Apert, writes **JOHN BRIDGWATER.**

Town took the lead midway through the first half with Guy Guilford scoring directly from a corner, but their advantage lasted only a few minutes when Alport headed home from a corner of their own.

However, five minutes before the break, Town went back in front when captain Olly Jones set up Jack Harris to smash home at the back post.

The second half saw Alport push on the Oswestry side's back line, and within 10 minutes of the restart they were back level with a fortunate goal.

Both teams were now looking for the winner with Town's Jack Harris causing Alport defence big problems, and with just five minutes to go the decisive goal came from Dave Hartshorn who lobbed the Alport keeper from a full 40 yards.

Town will now meet Malpas FC in the final on Monday April, 4.

It proved a good few days for FC Oswestry Town who stand on the brink of landing the Mercian League premier division crown despite having no league game themselves.

With Rock Rovers crashing 4-1 away to Church Stretton, Town just need to defeat Broseley in their next league game on Saturday, April 2 to clinch the title.

Before then, next up is a trip to Bridgnorth reserves in the premier division cup on Saturday.

The club, meanwhile, held a gala dinner at the Venue Park Hall last Saturday to raise funds for the club.

FC Oswestry also, have a new sponsor on board, Arla Foods based on Maesbury Road, who have provided the team with some warm tops.

Llanfair are looking over shoulder in drop battle

RELEGATION fears are mounting for Llanfair United whose poor run of form continued in the Huws Gray Cymru Alliance as they succumbed 2-1 at home to Buckley Town to remain deep in basement danger.

After trailing to a 20th minute opener from Matty Roberts, Llanfair levelled 12 minutes later courtesy of Jamie Davies, but a goal from Adam Pugh on the hour proved decisive as United slipped to their fourth straight defeat.

Boss Rhys Stephens was disappointed at the defending for both the goals, the first finding the net from a corner, before Davies levelled when heading in an Iain Edmunds cross.

After the interval, Pugh capitalised on some hesitant defending when nipping to score what proved the decisive goal.

Llanfair had their chances, with Dan Jones seeing an effort late on handled on the line in a goalmouth scramble, but appeals for a penalty were turned down as neither referee nor linesman saw the incident.

Defeat now leaves them just one point above Caersws who took an massive step towards survival with a crucial 1-0 win at basement rivals Mold Alex.

Scott Williams grabbed the decisive goal just before half time when chesting the ball down to volley in to score from six yards.

Penalty

Mold had struck the post three times before that, but the Bluebirds never looked in any real danger in the second period to move up the table to third from bottom.

GUILDSFIELD returned to winning ways with a 3-1 home verdict against Prestatyn Town to keep alive hopes of a top three finish in the Cymru Alliance.

After the previous week's disappointment of losing to Denbigh Town that effectively scuppered their title ambitions, the Guils bounced back well with a precious three points.

Chris Cathrall gave the Guils he perfect start with a second minute opener when cutting in to fire in from the edge of the box.

James Henderson, with a header that found the net off Paul O'Neil following a defensive slip, then doubled the lead early in the second period as the hosts looked lively going forward.

Mike Parker pulled one back on 74 minutes when neatly lifting the ball into the net, but a penalty from substitute Adam Jenkins four minutes from time sealed the home win.

The one downside was that Jake Cook, the league's player of the month for February, was stretched off with an ankle injury.

Fixtures

Huws Gray Cymru Alliance (2.30): Buckley Town v Rhayader Town, Conwy Borough v Llandudno, Denbigh Town v Caersws, Gresford Ath v Caernarfon Town, Holyhead Hotspur v Flint Town Utd, Holywell Town v Mold Alex, Llanfair United v Prestatyn Town, Porthmadog v Cefn Druids. Monday, **March 28:** Caersws v Mold Alex

Dowling nets hat-trick for Reserves side

TIM Dowling bagged a hat-trick as Llanfair United reserves won 5-0 at Trefonen to stay on course for the JT Hughes Montgomeryshire League division one title.

Jay Bishop and an own goal completed the tally against the basement hosts as Llanfair moved nine points clear of Meifod.

Gulfsfield reserves, lying third, were held to a goalless deadlock at lowly Llanfechain.

Results

Div one: Caersws Res 0 Llanymynech 1, Llanfechain 0 Gulfsfield Res 0, Llanrhaeadr Res 3 Waterloo Rovers Res 4, Trefonen 0 Llanfair Res 5.

Div two: Fforden Utd 2 Kerry Res 5, Maes-y-hendri 0 Berriew Res 7, Newtown Rovers 5 Newtown Wanderers 3.

League Cup round two: Llangedwyn 1 Meifod 5.

Meredith makes merry in Llan victory

GARY Meredith scored twice as Llanrhaeadr stayed on course for a top four finish in the Spar Mid Wales League division one with a 3-1 success at Bow Street.

After Llan had gone behind to a stunning 30-yarder, the front runner set up the equaliser when his cross was headed in by Wayne Austin on 18 minutes.

The villagers were ahead three minutes before the break when Meredith latched onto a through ball from Kieran Evans, before getting his second 10 minutes from time to seal the win after Joe Makinson had threatened the ball through.

Victory kept Llan in fourth spot, after Carno, who lie one place above, prevailed 4-2 at Tywyn Bryn-crug with Ashley Owen, Peter Rees, Andy Evans and Gregg Brown on target.

The title race is wide open after a late goal from Johnny Samuels sentenced Penrhyncoch to their first league defeat of the season when going down 2-1 at leaders Knighton Town.

After trailing to an early goal from Connor Bird, the Roosters looked to have secured a precious point in their top-of-the-table showdown when substitute Nathan Warren headed home 12 minutes from time.

But, with two minutes left, the Radnor Robins struck what could prove a crucial goal in the title race when Samuels stabbed the ball into the net

FOOTBALL by John Bridgwater

following a cross from the left.

Defeat really throws the tile race wide open, with Penrhyn four points behind Knighton, although they do have two games in hand. However, the league leaders do have superior goal difference which could prove vital come he end of the season.

WATERLOO ROVERS, buoyed by a welcome win the previous week, earned a last-gasp 3-3 at home to Machynlleth.

They had trailed by two goals, before pulling level at 2-2 through Dom Joseph and Andy Gwilt.

The visitors then regained the lead, but Rovers were not to be denied as Chris Proctor struck in the closing moments to earn parity.

WELSHPOOL, with just one win this year, were edged out 2-1 at Hay St Mary's as their tough run continued, although they remain in sixth spot in the table.

Lowly **MONTGOMERY** moved closer to relegation after their 6-2 home drubbing to Llanidloes Town who returned with the spoils helped by a hat-trick from Charlie Proctor.

Rhys Evans also scored twice for the visitors and Barry Haralambous headed the other for depleted Daffs who included manager Hugh Clarke in the

heart of the defence.

Elsewhere in division one, Llandrindod Wells ran out 3-1 home winners against Aberaeron who continue to languish in the lower reaches of he table.

BERRIEW, chasing the Spar League division two crown, suffered only their second defeat of the season when downed 2-1 at fellow promotion hopefuls Aberystwyth University.

The league leaders struggled to get into their stride, with Karl Seliearts getting their goal from the penalty spot, but the students were worthy winners as they took the spoils through Liam Powell and Rian Devlin to boost their own hopes of making a swift return to the first division.

Kerry, chasing promotion this season, were left frustrated as their home clash with struggling Bont was postponed after their opponents were unable to raise a team.

At the other end of the table, **FOUR CROSSES** finished 2-2 at Abermule to secure a welcome point, but **DYFFRYN BANW'S** slide goes on as they succumbed 3-1 at Radnor Valley.

Builth Wells prevailed 4-3 at Borth United, while Bettws notched a 2-1 home success against Newbridge.

Revised Central Wales Cup quarter-final draw: Hay St Marys v Cardigan Town or Kerry, Berriew v Llanrhaeadr, Gulfsfield v Abermule, Carno v Aberaeron.

Latest golf returns from your club

HAWKSTONE PARK

February Medal Division 1: T Nixon 81-13=68; M Harrington 82-11=71; K Salt 86-13=73. Division 2: M Meredith 91-19=72; I Vickersstaff 93-20-73; C Smith 100-26 =74. March Medal Division 1: C Smith 93 -26=67; K Atkinson 80-12=68; S Hodgkins 90-20=70. **Ladies February Medal:** M Hughes 105-27=78; K Gleave 90-11=79; L Goff 85-5=80. **Seniors' Stableford Division 1:** P Moorcroft 36pts off 16; D Ralphs 35pts off 14; R Ellis 34pts off 12. Division 2: D Driver-de-Ville 39pts off 24; P Mellor 36pts off 18; K Sanders 35pts off 24. **Junior March Medal:** M Moore 93-17=76; M Hughes 106=29=77; C Welch 96-11=78.

HENLLE PARK

Individual Stableford Division 1: J M Evans 38pts (c/b); H Price 38pts; E Hughes 37pts. Division 2: G Owen 32pts (c/b); R Grindley 32pts; A Patterson 31pts. **Ladies' Stableford:** M Pugh-Jones 33pts; P Tattersall 25pts; K Gleave 24pts. **Seniors' Stableford Division 1:** T Gleave 43pts; R Owens 35pts; G Wood 33pts. Division 2: S E Jones 33pts (c/b); N Russell 33pts; P Price 32pts.

MILE END

Seniors' March Stableford Division 1: P Trow 44pts; D Field 40pts; T Easthope 37pts. Division 2: R Osborne 45pts; R Hall 38pts; W Murray 36pts.

Roger Team Challenge Winners: R Roberts, H Cawley, R Meyer & J Northwood 85pts. Runners Up: G Jamieson, G Wright, B Sharpe & A Ord 83pts. Nearest the Pin: B Sharpe 1m 24.

March Stableford Division 1: P N Griffiths 44pts; J Thornell 39pts; P Hines 37pts. Division 2: P Eke 39pts; J E Roberts 37pts; G Manson 37pts. Division 3: A Pugh 38pts; A Carsley 35pts; M Pearson 35pts. Nearest the Pin: B Davies 7ft 3".

Ladies' March Stableford Division 1: A Pugh 35pts; M Holmes 30pts; C Good 27pts. Division 2: S O'Connor 28pts; J Bennett 28pts; A Walley.

OSWESTRY

Ladies' Bosom Buddies Canadian Green-somes Stableford (18 Holes): M Male, M Dunbar 38pts; E Gill, S Baxter 37pts (c/b); D Hild, B Humphreys 37pts (c/b); T Pearce, V Bradbeer 37pts (c/b); M Green, M Evans 35pts (c/b). (9 Holes): N Robinson, V Griffiths 14 (c/b); E Gooding, D Kennerly 14 (c/b).

Williams wins the Welshpool Winter League

MIKE Williams is this year's Winter League champion at Welshpool Golf Club with 55 points, winning by seven points from Richard Templeton on 48 and Justin Williamson on 44.

On Sunday, the final Rabbits and Tigers match of the winter was also played. This comprised teams of four competing in a Stableford competition.

The combination of Steve Morris (17), Graham Jones (17), Mark Roberts (17) and Martin Ward (18) won with a 20 under par score of 96. Second were Graham Jones (13), Sammy Marck (17), Steve Lloyd (20) and Dean Bowen (21) with a score of 95 points.

The first seniors trophy of the season was on Tuesday with a three club Stableford. Phil Constable (15) won with 34 points, Sue Jones (17) was second with 29 and ladies captain, Sue Shemilt (24) was third with 28.

Thursday's senior captains choice was a three-ball Texas Scramble over 12 holes where Margaret Bowen, Peter Sharman and Mike Kendal won with a net 44.2. Second were Dibby Davies, Will Cooke and Ray Bowen (46.1) and third were John Morley, Peter Dixon and Sue Shemilt with 46.5.

Harriers are flying with superb times

MALDWYN Harriers Joseph Crutchley and Roger Farrington turned in impressive performances at the Welsh National Cross-Country Championships in Swansea.

Harrington, from Priest Weston, was third over 50 in the seniors, clocking 43:13 over the 10.5km course, while Llanidloes teenager Crutchley was fifth in the under-17 men's race in a time of 19:27.

Crutchley will represent North Wales at the UK Inter-Counties Championship where he will be joined in the squad by Maldwyn clubmates Dan Stones (under-13) and Margo Martin (under-20), while Shannon Walker (under-15) will be an on-standby reserve.

Dillon Gill has also been selected at under-15 level but is unable to compete due to commitments.

Ellesmere derby looms for Shawbury

SHAWBURY UNITED boss Dave Richards has urged his West Midlands League premier division table-toppers to maintain their proud unbeaten record in Shropshire derbies this season ahead of Saturday's key home clash with Ellesmere Rangers.

But Jamie Haynes, Ellesmere's player-coach, insists the Beech Grove men will make the short trip with plenty of confidence after being unfortunate to lose to a late goal at second-placed AFC Bridgnorth last weekend.

Shawbury saw their 10-game unbeaten record come to an end with a last-gasp 1-0 defeat at Herford club Pegasus Juniors last Saturday, with the decisive goal coming in the last minute just seconds after Richards felt his side should have been awarded a penalty.

Ellesmere were beaten 1-0 at the same time at AFC Bridgnorth, a result which cut Shawbury's advantage in pole position to seven points, having also played four games more than Bridgnorth.

RANGERS went down 1-0 by AFC Bridgnorth at the Crown Meadow, with an 80th minute strike from Tom Grainger, a substitute, proving the difference. "We defended ever so well all game and it had 0-0 written all over it," said Ellesmere player-coach Jamie Haynes. "It was frustrating as we deserved something out of it."

"I think a point would have been fair for both teams, but it turned out to be a massive result for Bridgnorth with Shawbury losing."

Ellesmere had their chances, notably when Josh Brown was sent clear on the stroke of half time, but he was unable to beat the Bridgnorth keeper.

"It was probably the worst pitch we've played on all season, bobbly, uneven," added Haynes. "I thought we outbattled them and won most of the second half."

Haynes added Ellesmere are now looking forward to pitting their wits against Shawbury this weekend.

"We owe them one from when we played them last time," he insisted. "We gave a silly free kick away and they capitalised and beat us 2-1."

Eagles edged out as title race hotting up

RUGBY by John Bridgwater

OSWESTRY'S title hopes in rugby's Cheshire South suffered a setback when edged out 23-22 at Moore in a hard-fought encounter that saw the border men lose crucial ground on the leaders.

Defeat left the Eagles seven points adrift of high flying Manchester Medics who moved closer to the league title courtesy of a 33-5 victory away to Vagabonds.

Moore, fielding a completely changed team from the one that lost away to Oswestry earlier in the season, were up for the battle roared on by their support.

The Eagles, however, were soon on the front foot, and Ivor Hughes almost went over in the first minute after a terrific move from centre put the winger through, but the referee ruled a knock-on.

It was the home side but who struck first with a penalty from fly half Lewis Johnston, but Oswestry came back with a well worked try from Aiden Guenole who mesmerised the Moore defence with a dummy pass to score in the corner, the conversion missed.

The visitors now had the Moore defence on the back foot out, with strong scrummaging and terrific pick up and drive moves, but another Johnston penalty gave the home side a 6-5 advantage.

Captain Andy Smith now rallied his team to up their game, and they responded with a second touchdown.

Quick ball from scrum half Hamish Fuller out to Gaz Ellis was then passed along to Hughes who kicked on towards the Moore try line. Captain Smith then gathered the ball and bulldozed his way through the defence to score near the posts, with Fin Grogan converting.

The Eagles were still dictating play, and looked to have scored another try following a fine kick again from Hughes, but man-of-the match Zac Baldwin's pick up was judged to have been knocked on following protests by the crowd, although the referee was 30 metres behind play.

Positive thinking

Moore, following some good kicking took the game back up the pitch, and went over for a converted try to take a slender 13-12 interval lead, with all to play for in the second half.

The Eagles knew they had to stay calm in the second half with positive thinking, and keep to the game plan. They were forced into changes with Nick Clay injured early on, which saw Jamie Luckett come on with James Anderson.

The Eagles were on the attack, and despite some stirring home defence, an excellent move from the centre involving Luca Owen Youens, Dan Morgan and Aussie Guenole led to a third try.

The ball was switched from left and right, the strong Os pack picked up the ruck ball near Moore five metre line and Anderson darted through the home defence to score a well worked try from the whole team, with Grogan converting for a 19-13 lead.

Moore, now sensing the game was not going their way, relied on the boot of their talented fly half Johnston who put Oswestry on the back foot. The Eagles defence held up tight, before being prised open by the centre who darted through for a converted touchdown.

It was nip and tuck, a penalty put the visitors back in front with only five minutes go, but the home side snatched a 23-22 win with another kick to stun the visitors.

It was a disappointing outcome, but Os are still well placed for promotion after opening up a 17-point lead on fourth placed Vagabonds.

There are no games Easter Weekend, with the Eagles resuming their challenge at home to Isle of Man side Ramsey the following Saturday.

OSWESTRY II are up to fourth in the North West League division two (south) after reeling off their third straight win with a 39-13 success over Northwich Thirlds.

Dead heat for Wynnstay bowlers



Brian Cowly and Keith Clipsham with the winner's shield with runner-up Bernice Getkahn (back left,) and Wynnstay Bowling Club club president Janice Allport

SIX months of battling away to be the top indoor bowler champion, ended in a dead heat among two Wynnstay Bowling Club members when the winners were revealed last Wednesday.

And it proved a cliffhanger right up to last week's get-together at The Flash in Welshpool, with member Keith Clipsham in the lead, but with fellow bowler Bernice Getkahn hot on his heels.

Then, thanks to a final victorious spurt by fellow member Brian Cowley leapfrogging Bernice's 151 points, to join Keith Clipsham with 160 points apiece to share the champion indoor bowler shield.

They were given the shield at a presentation lunch at the Wynnstay Hotel, where they were all being congratulated by club president Janice Allport.

And now that the indoor winter bowling season is over members meet this Thursday for the opening of the green for the 2016 grass season.

Anyone wishing to join Wynnstay Bowling Club, or to know more about the club - which meets behind the Wynnstay Hotel in its walled garden - can contact Janice Allport on Oswestry 652301.

Sharks in the swim with solid displays

AFTER three hard fought rounds, Welshpool Sharks Swimming Club have secured second place behind winners Wrexham in this year's East Clywd Senior League.

Known as the ECL, the league is battled out over the course of three galas between Buckley, Connah's Quay, Flint, Mold, Welshpool and Wrexham by swimmers aged 10 years and upwards including open adult categories.

The Welshpool-based team put in some really big performances to head off challenges from Mold and Buckley, but weren't quite strong enough to match Wrexham.

In the first round, the Sharks were short on swimmers in both the youngest and oldest age groups, so had to draft in some of its youngest members with Taiya Griffiths (8yr) and Poppy Livermore (7yr) performing brilliantly against much older swimmers.

Similarly, Jack Lewis (9yr) and Zac McCourt (10yr) did a fine job in the boy events.

In the older 'open' adults age group, the Sharks had to rely on their 13 and 14-year-olds who, as ever, performed admirably. It was a hard fought gala with Sharks finishing the first round in joint second with Mold.

In the second round, Sharks were able to field a bigger and stronger team with the likes of Billy Hunt and Jason Simister available for selection.

And this saw the club push Wrexham all the way, just drifting off the pace in the last few events to finish a comfortable second.

The third and final round saw another depleted Sharks team travelling to Holywell, but nevertheless they pulled some great swims out of the bag and just pipped Connah's Quay into third place with Buckley in second behind Wrexham.

That third place position in the final day of swimming meant that

Welshpool out of Mid Wales Cup

WELSHPOOL bowed out of the Mid Wales Rugby Cup after suffering a 15-0 defeat at Llandrindod Wells in the quarter-finals - the first meeting between the club in many years.

The floodlit tie proved a competitive affair, being played at a frantic pace with both teams having forays into each other's territory.

But it was the Wellmen who took the lead when a concerted spell inside the Welshpool 22 resulted in a try from prop Ashley Hammond who forced his way over from close range.

This set Llandrindod into life led by some rampaging runs from captain Geraint Evans and scrum half Dale Wilson and further pressure on the visitors defence allowed tight head prop Noel Davies Jones to crash over and score his first try for the club, the try again unconverted.

The second half pattern followed the first with Pool causing problems at the scrum but Llandrindod looked slick with ball in hand with sometimes just the final touch lacking.

The result was put beyond doubt when the hosts grabbed a third score when an excellent blind side move orchestrated by Evans and Wilson put winger Jac Holden into space before brilliant interplay with replacement flanker Tom Bradley saw Holden crash over.

Llandrindod will now entertain Llanidloes, with the date to be confirmed.

Ladies team slip to defeat

OSWESTRY Ladies ended up well beaten when slipping to a 5-0 home loss to second in the table Warrington in their penultimate action in the Cheshire Women's Hockey League division two.

It has been a mixed season for the border club who, lying eighth in the table, have won eight games, lost 10 and drawn three.

Sport

Bowls
Wynnstay final a
dead-heat – P35

Football
Town celebrate at
the double – P34



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Clubs receive cash help for ground work

MORE than £120,00 in grants from Welsh football chiefs has been awarded to mid Wales clubs to improve their grounds.

Among the beneficiaries from the Welsh Grounds Initiative are Cymru Alliance duo Guilsfield and Llanfair United, who have received £75,000 between them.

Also receiving grant aid are Spar Mid Wales League clubs Llanrhaeadr and Berriew.

Welsh Grounds Improvements (WGI), a sister organisation of the Welsh Football Trust, was formed in 2008 and is a joint venture between the trust and the Football Association of Wales.

Since its formation, WGI has distributed more than £3m of FAW money as grant aid for clubs to improve facilities.

Llanfair are in line for a total of £48,000 to help provide an additional 100 seats in their existing stand at the Mount Field, as well as two new 75-seater sands and pitch enlargement and drainage.

Guilsfield, who have been challenging for league honours this season, have been awarded £27,000 to install two new 75-seater stands at their Clos Mytton ground.

Spar Mid Wales League clubs are also set to benefit, with division one outfit Llanrhaeadr receiving £6,500 to reposition their pitch and barrier, as well as installing hard standing.

Berriew, chasing promotion from division two, will also be able to go ahead with work to upgrade showers and install new dugouts at their ground after landing a grant of £5,500.

Elsewhere, division one leaders Knighton Town have been awarded £17,500 to upgrade floodlights and carry out work on their hard standing and barrier around the pitch.

There is £1,600 for Hay St Marys to upgrade floodlights, while Penrhyncoch have received £4,100 for pitch work and hardstanding as well as a walkway to the pitch.

Llanidloes Town have received £2,300 for new tip-up seats in the stands, Radnor Valley £2,550 for new dugouts and Newbridge £6,950 to upgrade showers.

Phil Pritchard, FA of Wales life vice-president and director of Welsh Ground Improvements Ltd, is thrilled that clubs in the region will be rewarded for their efforts in improving their grounds.

"I am delighted that clubs in mid Wales have been very proactive in moving forward with schemes that will enhance our football grounds," he said.

Pupils get chance to quiz Wales boss

WALEs football manager Chris Coleman will be a special guest in Welshpool next month.

Coleman, who has taken Wales to the European Championships this summer, will visit the town on Thursday, April 14 for an evening of events that includes the official opening of the new Tegwyn Evans stand at the town's football club.

Coleman will attend junior training at 6.30pm, followed by a question and answer session for the high school pupils an hour later.

Eagles still have sights set on top spot

Rugby by John Bridgwater

OSWESTRY still hope they can still take rugby's Cheshire League title race down to the wire despite suffering a third defeat of the season.

The Eagles were dealt a blow after a late penalty sentenced them to a hard-fought 23-22 loss at new-look Moore.

That left them seven points adrift of leaders Manchester Medics, who moved closer to the league title courtesy of a 33-5 victory away to Vagabonds.

With just four games remaining, the Medics are firm favourites, but Oswestry will be out to keep up the pressure in the coming weeks.

Despite the defeat, the Eagles stand on the brink of promotion to the South Lancs and

Cheshire One as they now have a 17-point advantage on fourth-placed Vagabonds.

With no games this Easter weekend, Oswestry look to rekindle their title challenge at home to another Isle of Man side Ramsey the following Saturday.

Across the border, clubs return to league duty on Saturday after a two-week break, with COBRA looking to take another step towards safety in the Swalec Welsh League division one (north) when they head to Ruthin.

The Meifod side lie just above the two relega-

tion places, nine points clear of Dolgellau, after being dragged back down to danger following defeats in their last two games.

They succumbed 27-3 at runaway leaders Nant Conwy, which was followed by a disappointing 14-10 reverse at home to Mold in their last outing. Ruthin lie just a couple of places above COBRA, who will want to quickly ease any fears of relegation in the first of their five remaining games.

WELSHPOOL bid to consolidate fourth spot when they resume hostilities with a scheduled trip to Holyhead in division three (north).

The top three clubs are well clear in the table, but Pool, who have seven games left, will be out to secure a creditable finish.

Stephens is confident in survival fight

LLANFAIR UNITED boss Rhys Stephens says it's still all to play for in his side's survival battle in the Cymru Alliance despite slipping deeper into trouble with a fourth straight defeat.

United remain fourth from bottom after losing 2-1 to Buckley Town, but still have enough time to claw themselves away from danger.

It is getting tight with Caersws just one point behind the Llanfair men, but Stephens insists there is still a long way go as his side prepare for Saturday's home clash with Prestatyn Town.

"It's getting tight and it's realistically now come down to three teams out of the bottom five that will go down," he said.

"But we've still got nine games left, so there's miles to go. If we can get three wins that could be enough.

"It was disappointing against Buckley as we conceded two bad goals. We have been pretty good lately, but two poor pieces of defending cost us.

"Credit to Buckley, they won the game and they will be thinking they're safe now. But it was a game we could have got something out of."

He added: "For the first time this season I felt hard done by with a decision. There was a handball on their line at the end, but the referee and linesman said they didn't see it."

Meanwhile, Llanfair reserves have a big date on Good Friday when they take on Llandysul in the final of the Emrys Morgan Cup at Penrhyncoch. Kick off 6pm.

Matthews sets the goalscoring pace

STRIKER Iwan Matthews is the current hot-shot in the Spar Mid Wales League division one.

The LLANRHAEDR marksman has netted 23 goals, 19 in the league and four in the cup, while WELSHPOOL'S Will Thomas is fourth with 17 to his name – 16 in the league.

Matthews will be hoping to stay among the goals as Llan look to consolidate their top-four position away to Aberaeron on Saturday. Welshpool, who have faded following a bright start to the season, will be hoping to get back on the winning trail at home to Bow Street.

Meanwhile, BERRIEW are still looking good for the second division title despite their 2-1 reverse at Aberystwyth University. It was only their second league loss of the season, but they remain one point clear of the students, with three games in hand.

Guilsfield are looking good for some silverware this season after sealing their place in the semi-final of the Central Wales Cup with a 3-0 victory over Abermule at Clos Mytton.

The Cymru Alliance men were firm favourites against a side playing in the Spar League division two, and scored all three goals in the first half.

Using the midweek game as a chance to make changes, they were ahead through an own goal before player boss Dan Barton scored a second at the far post after a corner had been flicked on.

James Henderson then made it three from a Mark Davies free kick, a lead the Guils never looked likely to relinquish despite the spirit shown by the visitors.

TNS ON VERGE OF TITLE NO.10

By John Bridgwater

THE New Saints could be crowned Welsh Premier League champions for a fifth season in a row when they take on Newtown in Saturday's televised clash at Park Hall (5.15pm).

Despite suffering a second defeat of the season with last weekend's 2-1 reverse at gap Connah's Quay, the defending champions remain firmly on course for another title.

With nearest rivals Bala Town being held 2-2 at Newtown, the Saints are eight points clear with four games remaining – and have a far superior goal difference.

Should Bala fail to defeat Airbus UK on Friday afternoon, and TNS overcome the Robins the following day, then the league trophy will be claimed for another season – and 10th time in the club's history.

It would also complete the second stage of a possible back-to-back treble for the Saints who are also just two games away from lifting the Welsh Cup.

With so much to play for, boss Craig Harrison will be looking for his side to shrug off only their second defeat of the season.

"Everyone's disappointed, we don't like getting beat, but the title is still very much in our own hands and there is a chance we could be champions come Saturday evening," he said.

"Regardless of Bala's result on Friday night, we want to win the game and get some momentum going as we've got a big three games coming up."

"We've got Connah's Quay in the Welsh Cup semi-final the week after, then we are home to Bala."

"If we do everything right ourselves, and we're at it 100 per cent, then we've got a great chance."

"And if we can go on to win the treble again this season, it must rank as the biggest achievement in domestic Welsh football."

The Saints will fancy their chances against Newtown following recent outings between the sides, which saw the pacesetters win 4-1 at home and 6-0 away in the league, while also prevailing 1-0 in the Welsh Cup.

Bird wings in to the county



Howzat! Dickie Bird (centre) with Jools Payne of Oswestry Chamber and Ian Payne of Oswestry CC

CRICKET fans were left spellbound after being entertained by legendary umpire Dickie Bird.

Bird was at Oswestry Cricket Club to speak about his glittering career. And the 82-year-old also hailed England's dramatic T20 World Cup win over South Africa.

Bird said: "I always felt England would get the runs. I don't think the South African bowling attack is that strong."

"I said they would get the runs and I was delighted to be proved right. And after this win I think our chances in the tournament are excellent."

"There is no reason why now they can't go on and win the tournament."

"They have as good a chance as anybody because the win over South Africa will give them a lot of confidence."

England's match-winner was Joe Root – singled out for greatness three years ago by Bird, who saw him shine for Yorkshire.

"Three years ago I saw something in the boy," said Bird, who was sponsored to attend the event by the Jools Payne Partnership, an Oswestry-based communications company.

"His footwork is tremendous and the most important thing in batting is your feet. He is beautifully balanced."

"He lets the ball come on to him and by that he picks the line and length up a lot quicker."

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